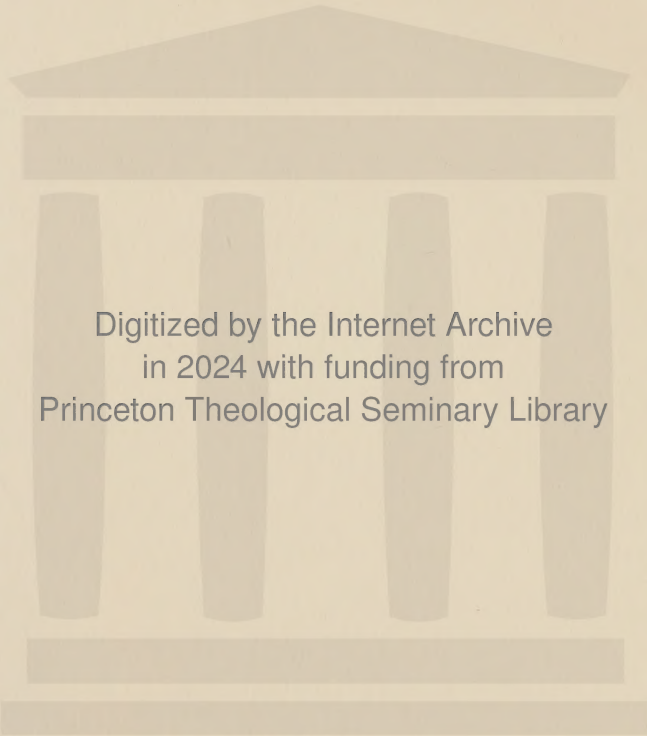


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A HISTORY

OF THE

CHURCH IN ENGLAND,

FROM

THE EARLIEST PERIOD, TO THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE HIERARCHY IN 1850.

BY THE

VERY REV. CANON FLANAGAN.

“Remember the days of old, think upon every generation: ask thy father, and he will declare to thee: thy elders, and they will tell thee.”—DEUT. xxxii. 7.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

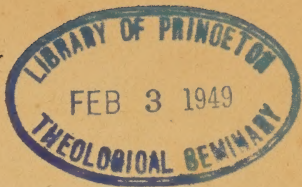
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PREFACE.

THE following work is a continuous narrative of the fortunes of the Church in this country, begins with the first conversion of the island, and terminates with the re-establishment of the hierarchy.

This narrative has been drawn from authors either actually contemporary, or, where such do not exist, from the nearest that can be found. It is from a rigid adherence to this rule, and not from mere distrust, that several beautiful stories, such as that of Gothrun, Alfred, and St. Cuthbert, have been altogether omitted.

In order that the reader may more easily judge of the credibility of the facts, the period in which the cited authorities lived is generally stated. For the same reason the very terms of these authorities, even for single words and phrases, are not unfrequently quoted, even at the risk of appearing either stiff or grotesque.

For a similar reason, where a speech might have been broken up into well-balanced sentences, the rough draft in which it has been transmitted to us has been sometimes preferred, as a token of genuineness far more valuable than mere modern symmetry.

It is not, however, the writer's intention to seize every minute detail, or to propound or develop antiquarian and rubrical theories or researches, or even to

wade deep in that sea of documents that still remains, almost unnoticed, in ancient libraries and state-paper offices.

Such being the object and plan of the work, the reader will scarcely ask why it was undertaken. More than fifty years have elapsed since the controversial treatises of Milner and Lingard, eliciting only impotent threats of a prosecution, proved that the spirit of that time in which Challoner was compelled to flee the country, was at length powerless, if not extinct, and that the Catholic press was no longer shackled ; and yet, to this day, no pen has traced any complete sketch, from the first conversion of the Britons to the present time, of the alternate sufferings and triumphs of the Church in England.

Is, then, the present generation to pass away like the preceding one, without the advantage of a history so interesting, so improving, and in many respects so edifying ? This question the writer asked himself when a friend had first suggested to him to undertake such a task. How was it to be answered ? There were, it is true, greater facilities than formerly : historical collectors, both Catholic and Protestant, have removed vast obstacles by the publication of unknown or scarcely accessible documents. There were, on the other hand, difficulties over and above the actual labour of the work : to say nothing of the unfortunate party spirit of seventy years ago, there is oftentimes a paucity of materials that tantalizes instead of gratifying curiosity ;* and, on the other

* Of the monuments of history that once existed, "a very small part," says Wharton, "has been transmitted to us." "The greatest part perished when, by the iniquity of the preceding age, the monasteries were destroyed, the collegiate churches demolished, and the libraries of both plundered, torn up, and given to the vilest uses, or

hand, when such materials might perhaps be discovered, the necessities of the Church are too pressing to allow time for prolonged investigations. Notwithstanding these and other difficulties, however, the utility of the task appeared so great, that the author did not long hesitate. He has therefore endeavoured in his intervals of leisure to scrutinize all the published monuments of the past; and, having thus secured what he deemed sufficient both for truth and edification, he must leave to another writer, and to more favourable times, the labour of a more finished work.

If the very name of edification, added to that of truth, causes any one to fear that the latter may be sacrificed to the former, the author trusts that a candid examination of the history will allay all such apprehensions. Believing truthfulness to be an historian's first requisite, he has never intentionally suppressed a disedifying fact, great or small, the omission of which might either disguise or distort the truth of the context, or might withhold a really useful warning.

Such facts are not unfrequent; and those who really know the world would be much more scandalized at their suppression in what ought to be a faithful mirror, than others could possibly be at their appearance. The latter class of readers are, indeed, learners, and should remember that, as the "world is seated in wickedness," they ought to be prepared to see much

even to the flames." This, he continues, was not always the result of avarice and impiety: "I have discovered that a certain bishop, rather more than a hundred years ago, under pretence of destroying the old superstition, gave all the monuments and registers of his church to the flames!"—*Anglia Sacra*, Præf. iv. (See also vol. ii. of the present work, p. 86, and note to p. 88.)

evil existing, even when the influence of the Church has grappled with, and bound, but not utterly destroyed, the evil inclinations of fallen nature. Indeed, in the history of the Church, it is seldom that the ordinary life of the good is referred to. It is a departure from such a life that is principally noticed and recorded. Such a departure from holiness may cause disturbances and scandal. It perhaps requires to be checked by the warnings or censures of the bishop of the locality ; or perhaps it has been creeping on, almost unperceived, until the evil is widespread, and requires the strong remedies of a provincial, or even of a general, council. It follows, then, that out of all the real events which the eye of God has seen in his Church, the least edifying are those which generally attract the eyes of men, and form its history. The actions of the Saints have often been concealed by their humility, or have attracted little attention, whilst notorious sins, disturbing the equable course of the Church, have necessarily been noticed, in order to be repressed or guarded against.

Let no one, then, when reading the annals of the Church, be surprised at what he reads. He ought to be prepared to see what was seen among the Apostles themselves : " Have I not called you twelve, and behold one of you is a devil." " Blessed is he who is not scandalized in me."

If Protestant readers feel inclined to cast aside what they conceive to be a " Popish theory," let them, if they choose, disregard the writer's sentiments ; but, in common fairness, let them either admit his facts, or try them not by those of modern historians, but by a little comparison, if only for a few pages, with the contemporary writers quoted as his vouchers.

This is now in many cases perfectly easy, even for those who know nothing of Latin ; since many of the contemporary writers thus quoted have been recently translated, and exist in every well-furnished English library.

If in the course of the work any expressions seem scarcely according to the sound form of words, let it be understood that the writer had not adverted to the fact, and never intended to use them, in any other sense than that of the Catholic Church.

Whatever has been said of apparent miracles, is intended only inasmuch as they are historical facts ;— in short, in these and in all other matters, the writer unreservedly submits his opinions and statements to the judgment of the Apostolic See.

May 13, 1857.

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HISTORY

OF

THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

THE BRITISH CHURCH: WAS IT FOUNDED BY ST. JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA?—KING LUCIUS AND POPE ELEUTHERIUS.

IN a valley of Somersetshire, nearly surrounded with hills, but opening towards the Bristol Channel, the eye of the traveller who is descending on the Bath road is attracted not only by the beauty of the prospect, nor even merely by the towers of Wells Cathedral, but, above all, by the lofty, tapering hill, or Tor, as it is called, of the Isle of Avalon or Glastonbury. That lofty spot, and the ground immediately below, is hallowed with saintly reminiscences. There, by the tower that still remains upon the Tor, the last abbot of Glastonbury died for his fidelity to the Holy See. There, on the lower ground, where broken walls mark out the vast church, or where stands the beautiful semi-Norman chapel of St. Joseph of Arimathea, with many another relic of Catholic times, saints unnumbered have lived; and, amongst the rest, St. Patrick the Younger and St. Dunstan. It is, in short, of all Britain, the spot where probably the cross was first planted. When, however, we search for the details of this important event, or even for the authority upon which its probability rests, we are impeded at every step by the dimness of that remote period. The traditions of the church of Glastonbury itself declare that its first founder was St. Joseph of Arimathea. This it stated in its Chronicles; this it engraved upon tablets of brass, one of which it affixed

to a pillar and the other to a cross in the most conspicuous parts of its church. When pillar and cross had been swept away in the general wreck in the time of Henry VIII., the tablets were still preserved. Usher assures us that in his own time (the seventeenth century) they still existed. The larger of the two appeals for its voucher to the book "which is called Graal;" which Usher thinks was posterior to the time of William of Malmesbury, but which is assigned by Helinand to the beginning of the eighth century.*

Whatever may be the origin of the tradition, such a tradition there certainly was. Nor has this idea been, even to this day, obliterated. A visitor to Glastonbury is led with pride to the well of St. Joseph, beneath the magnificent chapel that still bears his name; and from thence to the thorn-tree that blossoms twice in the year,—once in the depth of winter, and, as he is told, the more abundantly as the frost is more intense. That thorn, he is reminded, was originally the staff of the saint. We may smile at modern tales; but when we find that they are the same in their chief points as the older traditions of the monastery itself, we feel that they are not to be thrust aside without examination.

The first question then is,—Are there any written monuments that either disprove or corroborate the tradition? Of the former class there are none; of the latter, several. William of Malmesbury, a writer of acute judgment, who died before the middle of the twelfth century, is perhaps the earliest extant that has written upon this subject. This historian tells us that in several places there were writings of the highest credibility to this effect: "The hands of other men made not the church at Glastonbury, but the disciples of Christ themselves erected it." †

* Ush. Brit. Eccl. Antiq. p. 9, 1687. Helinand was a Cistercian monk of the end of the twelfth century.

† "Sunt et illæ non exiguæ fidei literæ in nonnullis locis repertæ ad hanc sententiam: 'Ecclesiæ Glastoniæ non fecerunt aliorum hominum manus, sed ipsi discipuli Christi eam ædificaverunt.'"—Gest. Regum, c. 1, s. 19.

It is added by William, who here trusts to the authority of Freulf, a Gallic statesman and historian in the time of Charlemagne, that St. Philip, having preached the faith to the Gauls, sent his friend St. Joseph of Arimathea, with eleven companions, to convert the Britons.* This tradition of the Gauls agrees with that of the Britons themselves; for William of Malmesbury proceeds to quote some British historian still extant in his time, at Edmondsbury and St. Augustine's, Canterbury, as well as other works; and from these sources draws the conclusion that St. Joseph and his companions arrived at the western shores of the island; and that, although unsuccessful in their effort to convert the king, they obtained from him a grant of land at "Glastonia," then a small island, where, in obedience to a vision, they built a church of wicker-work, in honour of the Mother of God.

Years passed by, and the saintly colony had gone to its reward, when (as "annals worthy of belief narrate" †) the British king, Lucius, praying Pope Eleutherius to receive him into the One Fold, and to diffuse the light of the Gospel through Britain, received from Rome ("as British writings testify,"

* See his *Antiquities of the Church of Glastonbury*, ap. Gale, vol. i. I do not think we can attribute much weight to the document which William of Malmesbury quotes as St. Patrick's Charter. Certainly its statement about the discovery of the writings of SS. Phagan and Deruvian seems scarcely to agree with what William states about a community of twelve monks being always there from the times of SS. Phagan and Deruvian to that of St. Patrick. The discovery of these acts, moreover, has a somewhat suspicious resemblance to the discovery of those of St. Joseph of Arimathea. Yet such presumptions against their credibility are, it must be admitted, by no means conclusive: how many coincidences do we witness in every-day life.

† Here his testimony is supported by Nenn. sect. 22; and also by Venerable Bede. St. Bede's words are the following:—

"Lucius Britanniae rex missa ad Eleutherium Romae episcopum epistola ut Christianus efficiatur impetrat."—Sti. B. De Sex Ætat. A.D. 180.

"Obsecrans ut per ejus mandatum Christianus efficeretur, et mox effectum piæ postulationis consecutus est."—Sti. B. Hist. i. c. 4.

says William) the two most holy men Fagan and Deruvian.* Travelling once on their apostolic mission, these men, who had been raised by the Holy See to the dignity of bishops, came to the isle of Avallon, or Glastonbury as it was afterwards called. There they found the chapel still standing; and after a search, "the figure of our redemption, and other manifest signs" of Christianity. There, too, they found in old writings an account of St. Philip's arrival in Gaul, and of his sending twelve of his disciples to Britain.

This account, in which French and English writers agree, is confirmed by other circumstances. That church was built of twigs or wicker-work, in the manner in which the Britons always built before they adopted Roman improvements; and, what is equally striking, it certainly became known to the Anglo-Saxons as "the old church;" so that in the kingdom of Wessex no oath was more frequent, or considered more sacred, than to swear "by the old church." It may be thought that such a name was given when the Anglo-Saxons were first converted, in order to distinguish it from their own subsequent buildings. This, even so, would be a proof of its antiquity; but the oath referred to appears to have been adopted by the Anglo-Saxons from the older and dispossessed inheritors of the soil. A charter of the date A.D. 601 is preserved by William of Malmesbury, which, if it be genuine, would prove that it was called "the old church" by the Britons themselves.

William of Malmesbury states, moreover, that it was the most ancient in England with which he was acquainted. Now, he must undoubtedly have been acquainted with, and probably even saw and examined, the old British church of St. Martin's at Canterbury.

* Churches in the neighbourhood of Llandaff still bear the names of Ffagan and Dyfan, as well as of Llearwg or Lucius.—(Rees's Welsh Saints.) From this it has been inferred (and not improbably) that Lucius reigned in that neighbourhood: Glastonbury, if not in the same kingdom, was, certainly, at no great distance.

Certainly, being thoroughly master of Venerable Bede's History, and being inquisitive about historical monuments, he must have known that that church was one which had been erected, according to Venerable Bede, by the ancient Britons. Yet he pronounces that of Glastonbury to be the more ancient.*

Such are the grounds of this interesting, but half-forgotten tradition. It is time, however, to abandon these obscure investigations, and to begin our journey along the plain and solid road of genuine history.

* Gest. Reg. lib. i. sect. 20. See also his Antiq. Glaston. Eccl. ap. Gale, i. pp. 293, 294, and 300, &c.

CHAPTER II.

ANCIENT BRITISH HISTORIANS—DIOCLESIAN'S PERSECUTION—
ST. ALBAN.

TURNING from Glastonbury to other parts of Britain, we may long inquire in vain, for any precise information.* No native history, written before the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons, has been preserved. Of works that may have been written during the invasion itself, the only one still extant is that of St. Gildas, a British monk, born, it appears, about six hundred years after Christ. The short history of the Britons by Nennius, who lived more than a century after the time of St. Gildas, is considered to be of little historical value. Much, therefore, as may have been conjectured, there is but little really known, concerning the growth and general condition of the Ancient British Church.†

* Continental historians have, indeed, referred in such a manner to the preaching of St. Peter, St. Paul, and others, as to be supposed by some to mean that the Apostles preached in Britain. The discussion of so obscure a question is foreign to the object of the present history. It may be found at sufficient length in F. Persons' "Three Conversions of England," published (with only the initials, N. D.) in 1603 and 1688; and also in Appendix to Lingard's *Angl. Sax. Antiq.* "N. D." thus sums up and refutes what is sometimes said of Claudia Ruffina, the wife of Pudens. Martial complimented a certain Claudia upon her surpassing beauty; this was in the time of Trajan, sixty years after St. Paul mentioned a certain Claudia: the latter, therefore, if living at all when Martial wrote, must have been advanced in years, &c., therefore a different person.—(Page 6, ed. 1688.) Those that are curious to see how Persons was met by other writers, may turn to the quaint, flippancy pages of Fuller's *Church Hist.* book i. cent. i. No. 9 and 10.

† If any one be disposed to lay stress upon what is sometimes said of Fagan and Deruvian, because mentioned by Giraldus Cambrensis, let him remember that Girald, a writer of no great judgment, acknowledges, in his "Retractations," that what he said regarding the establishment of metropolitan sees by Fagan and Duvian, as well as

For a hundred years after the mission from Rome of Lucius's envoys, all British ecclesiastical transactions are lost in impenetrable darkness. At length, when the edicts of Dioclesian had been issued, against the Christians, one short-lived gleam of light appears, and reveals to us at least one striking fact in Britain's first persecution. Dioclesian's edicts go forth, and at once the Holy Scriptures here, as in all parts of the Roman empire, are burned in the streets, the churches are reduced to ashes, soldiers are hunting out the Christians, confessors are wandering in the recesses of hills and forests, and martyrs are smiling upon their persecutors, and passing to their reward.

Caer-leon upon Usk saw, foremost amongst those of its children who were shedding their blood for the faith, the heroic pair, Sts. Aaron and Julian. Verulam, however, outshone the whole island: nowhere in the country was there so undaunted a confessor as St. Alban, the "protomartyr" of Britain. He was still a pagan, when he met with a "cleric" upon the point of falling into the hands of his pursuers. Alban at once secreted him under his own roof. For some days the Christian fugitive remained unmolested, and Alban was astonished and converted by the fervent life, and the continued prayers and vigils of the man of God.

The Roman commander, who, from his title of "Princeps," appears to have been Constantius, had, meantime, ordered a closer search; and now, at last, the soldiers presented themselves at St. Alban's cottage. He was awaiting them, arrayed in his "guest's caracalla," or vestment. Thinking that they had secured

regarding both the dignity and liberty of the church of St. David's, and the number of its suffragan bishops, were collected from popular rumours and opinions, and not supported upon the certainty of any history.—See Gir.'s *Retract. ap. Whart. ii. p. 456.*

William of Malmesbury, who wrote some years before Girald was born, tells us that a matter of even such importance as "where the archiepiscopal see existed in the time of the Britons, is no longer known, because lapse of time," &c.—*Prolog. lib. i. De Gest. Pont.*

their prize, the soldiers hurried him to their chief. He at once perceived the stratagem; and with threats and wrathful words, told St. Alban that his only alternative was to sacrifice, or to expect the fate intended for the cleric.

When asked his name, St. Alban said that he was now a Christian, and was devoted to the duties of a Christian. When again asked for his name, he replied: "By my parents I am called Alban, and I adore and always worship the true and living God, who created everything." "Sacrifice to the great gods," was the angry interruption. The answer was prompt and undisguised: "These sacrifices, offered to devils, instead of obtaining the prayer of the petitioner, merit for him the eternal punishments of Hell." The judge's reply was a command to the attendant lictors to scourge him. Anon he was stripped and bound, and the blows fell thick. In vain the toil of the executioners: the martyr's soul is firm, although his flesh is rent and bloody. Away with him to the block. The soldiers close around him, and advance; the crowd rushes on before; even the judge's attendants leave their master, and hurry away to witness the end of that heroic constancy. The place of execution is beyond the river, but so crowded and beset is the bridge, that the soldiers are obliged to halt. The martyr, it seems, must wait till evening for his crown.

Longing for that blessed state, on the very threshold of which he was standing, he approached the stream with eyes raised to heaven, and the waters, we are told, divided, and suffered him to pass on dry ground. Astonished at the miracle, the executioner threw away his sword, and, moved by grace, begged to die for the saint, or, at least, in his company. During the delay that followed, a fountain gushed, at St. Alban's prayer, from the eminence on which he stood. Another executioner having now been appointed, the martyr cheerfully gave his neck to the stroke. "The eyes of the executioner fell to the ground," says St. Bede,

along with the martyr's head. The recent convert, then, in like manner, sealed his faith with his blood. Cures and miracles, adds St. Bede, "are there worked even to this day." Astonished at what had happened, the Roman ruler ordered the persecution in Britain to cease (A.D. 305). The Christians quitted their hiding-places, and joyfully rebuilt their churches; and "in various places," adds St. Gildas, "they founded, completed, and publicly displayed, as standards of victory, various basilicas of the martyrs." Amongst these was one upon the spot where St. Alban suffered. It was erected with a magnificence worthy of so great a martyr; and even to this day, says St. Bede, is famous for continual miracles. When peace returned, after the Anglo-Saxon conquest, another Church, part of a Benedictine monastery, was erected by King Offa, upon the site of the older edifice; and around this sprang up, in course of time, outside the forsaken walls of Verulam, the present town, called, from the monastery and the martyr's tomb, St. Alban's.*

* Compare St. Gildas, Hist. ss. 9, 12, and St. Bede, lib. 1, c. 7. St. Bede tells us that the new town near Verulam was first called Verlamacester or Watlingacester; so that the name of St. Alban's was taken more immediately from the monastery.

CHAPTER III.

MONUMENTS OF THE FAITH OF THE ANCIENT BRITONS—THE DONATISTS—BRITISH BISHOPS AT THE COUNCIL OF ARLES—ARIANISM—BRITISH BISHOPS AT THE COUNCIL OF SARDICA—PELAGIANISM—ST. GERMAN, LEGATE OF THE HOLY SEE, IN BRITAIN.

AFTER the close of Dioclesian's persecution, the remains of British History become again extremely scanty. Occasionally, however, mention is made of the usages of the British Christians : such as their having not only churches, or "basilicas of martyrs," but "sacrificial altars,"* which they esteemed "most holy," and "the seat of the heavenly sacrifice;"† an "ecclesiastical chant," monks, and nuns bound by voluntary oaths of poverty, chastity, and obedience; a blessing by which the hands of "priests or ministers" were "initiated," and an anointing of their kings.‡ Mention, too, is distinctly made of the chief points of their doctrine: such as St. Peter's being the "prince of the Apostles, and his receiving for himself and his successors the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Such, too, as St. Gildas's argument for humility, from Christ's having said of himself, by his prophet: "I am a worm and no man, the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people;" and, again, from Christ's having said: "I cannot of myself do anything;" "although, being co-eternal and one and the same substance with the Father and the Holy Ghost, he himself it was that made heaven and earth, with all

* "*Ἐκκλησίαι καὶ θυσιαστήρια πεπήγασιν.*"—Sti. Chrysost. contra Judæos, tom. i. p. 575; Maurist Ben. ed. Paris, 1718.

† "*Basilicas sanctorum martyrum*"....."*Sacrosancta altaria..... sacrificii cœlestis sedem.*"—Gildas, Hist. s. 12; and Ep. s. 28.

‡ Ib. Ep. s. 34; 34, 32, et passim; 106 ("*benedictione quâ initiantur sacerdotum vel ministrorum manus,*" &c.); and Hist. s. 21.

their inestimable garniture, not by another's, but by his own power ;" showing clearly, not only in this, but in other passages, the orthodox doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, as well as of the Incarnation. Enough, too, is left to show that the British bishops took an active part in the general functions of the Catholic Church, especially in their assisting at various Councils, in order to repress the Arian and other heresies.*

The Church had been assailed from its very commencement, not only by tyrannical laws, but by schisms and heresies. Against the promoters of such wickedness, St. Paul raised his voice, as against men "corrupted in their mind, and reprobate concerning the faith." St. John, too, raised his voice against them : "If any man come to you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, nor say to him, God speed you." St. Ignatius the Martyr, who succeeded St. Peter in the chair of Antioch, terms them "rabid dogs whose bites are difficult to cure ;"† "beasts in human figure."‡ In the same manner, the Church, to save its children from deception, continued, during the persecutions of the first three centuries, to brand with its anathema every rising heresy.

When persecution ceased, the temerity of innovators continued. The Donatist schism, in Africa, was one of the first, in that new epoch of peace, to attract the vigilant eyes of the Church. St. Cecilian, then archdeacon of the Church of Carthage, had, as he was bound to do, reproved a lady, named Lucilia, for venerating a relic, not recognised as such by the Church. When this lady saw the zealous archdeacon raised to the episcopacy, she supported with all her wealth and influence another African bishop, named Donatus, in his misguided efforts to procure the deposition of the saint. A mock synod

* Ep. ss. 106, 109, and 74.

† Ep. ad Ephes.

‡ Ib. ad Smyr.

actually condemned him. He, nevertheless, remained calmly at his post : he knew that this was his right and duty ; because, says St. Augustine, he saw himself in communion with the Roman Church, where has always been the primacy of the Apostolic chair.*

His enemies, however, persisted in the most active opposition. He was one, they said, who had reconciled the traditors, or betrayers, of the sacred vessels and books, in the recent persecutions ; and who had prevented food from being taken to the confessors in prison. The timorous and credulous were shaken or alarmed by the very boldness of the saint's opponents ; and the schism not only increased, but displayed its violent character in frequent seditions. Constantine, who was himself, it seems (as well as his mother, St. Helena), a native of Britain, was now emperor.† He obtained a canonical investigation at Rome, and then endeavoured to enforce the sentence in favour of St. Cecilian, which the synod there held had pronounced. The schismatics, however, returned the usual answer, that the cause had not been sufficiently heard ; adding that it was condemned with closed doors ; and thus they obstinately continued their tumultuous schism. The emperor, therefore, commanded his governor or vicar in Africa, to send St. Cecilian and some of his friends, as well as some of the opposite party, to Arles, that they might plead together in presence of another synod.‡

This synod renewed the sentence in favour of St. Cecilian. Its canons were signed, among others, by two, if not three, British bishops ; Eborius of York, and Restitutus of London.§ In these canons, men-

* "Cum se videret et Romanæ ecclesiæ in quâ semper apostolicæ cathedræ viguit principatusconjunctum."—St. Aug. Ep. 43, n. 7 ; Paris, 1836.

† For the opinions regarding the birthplace of Constantine and St. Helena, and for the famous dispute between Camden and Justus Lipsius, see Usher's *Antiq.* c. 8.

‡ The above account is the substance of the epistles in Labbe.

§ The three subscriptions referred to are thus attached :—
"Eborius, episcopus de civitate Eboracensi, provincia Britannia.

tion is made of baptism "in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost:" and also of the imposition of hands, in order that the person baptized "may receive the Holy Spirit." The deacons are cautioned not to presume to act without the cognizance of the priest; while one bishop is not to encroach upon another's jurisdiction, nor to consecrate a bishop, unless assisted by seven, or at least three, others. An account of the proceedings was then sent to Rome, to "the most glorious Pope," as the synod expressed itself, who held the see in which the Apostles "sit daily." And thus, at last, the synod closed.

While the Donatists were filling all the north of Africa with confusion, the Arians, in Egypt and the East, had begun to teach that Christ was not God. They were solemnly condemned by the first General Council, that of Nice (A.D. 325). Arius, the unhappy author of the sect, refused to submit to the Church, and found support in the tyrannical emperor, Constantius. The sudden death of Arius, when entering Constantinople in triumphal procession, did not deter his followers from their impiety.

Another council was, therefore, assembled. It met at Sardica, near the present Sophia, in Turkey (A.D. 347). Amongst its three hundred bishops were some from the British islands.* The council renewed the condemnation of the supporters of Arianism, and exculpated St. Athanasius. In the canons of this Council it is declared, that if a bishop brings an accusation against a bishop of the same province, neither of them should call judges from another province; that, if any bishop, who has been condemned can show ground for another trial, those

Restitutus, episcopus de civitate Londinensi, provincia supra scripta. Adelfius, episcopus de civitate Colonia Londinensium."—Mansi's Labbe.

* Ib. Their names do not, indeed, appear in the fragments of the Council which are still extant; but St. Athanasius, not only a contemporary, but almost the centre upon which the whole struggle between orthodoxy and Arianism turned, assures us of the fact.—Opera S. Ath. t. i. contra Ar. p. 123; Paris, 1698.

who have been his judges should, in honour to Peter the Apostle, "write to Julius, the Roman bishop, and judgment by the neighbouring bishops of the province be renewed, if need be." It is again declared, that, if any bishop has been deposed by the judgment of the bishops of the neighbourhood, and yet says that he can make good his defence, that no one is to be appointed to his see, "before the Roman bishop, having inquired into the cause, shall have given sentence."

The reason why the bishops of Sardica thus referred to Rome, is plainly stated in their synodal letter to Pope Julius. It was "best and in the highest degree most fitting that the lord bishops should refer from every single province to the head, that is, to the see of the Apostle Peter." * It is evident, therefore, that the British Church acknowledged the Pope to be its "head," and was orthodox in its belief of the Blessed Trinity. It is scarcely necessary to quote from the remaining canons of this Council, that, if laymen were chosen for bishops, they should first be made to go through the usual grades of "lector, deacon, and priest."

About eleven years after the Council of Sardica, that of Ariminum, in Italy, was held. It was of far less importance than the former. It renewed the condemnation of the Arians; but after a long detention by the emperor, allowed itself to be partly duped and partly browbeaten to such a degree as to sign a formulary of faith, in which the very word in question, the consubstantiality of the Son, was omitted. The Pope refused to confirm their acts; and many of the bishops who had assisted at the Council, seeing the scandal that was caused, did their utmost to express their grief, and to disavow all tendency to Arianism.†

When, at last, both Donatism and Arianism

* Can. iii. iv. x. "Hoc enim optimum et valde congruentissimum esse videbitur, si ad caput, id est, ad Petri Apostoli sedem, de singulis quibuscumque provinciis domini referant sacerdotes."—Ap. Labbe, t. ii. p. 661.

† "Quæ Catholicam disciplinam, perfidiâ latente, loqueretur," &c.

were expiring, the new heresy of Pelagianism arose. The Catholic Church teaches us that man is unable, without God's grace, to do anything meritorious, that is, worthy, of eternal life. Some virtues purely moral he may have; and for these will undoubtedly receive an adequate temporal recompense. But for meriting eternal life, grace to begin, grace to renew each act, grace to persevere to the end, are no less necessary than man's own free co-operation with the grace thus bestowed.

Such a doctrine is certainly very humbling. The soul of man shut up in a body that depends, more than it will readily admit, upon its friends and neighbours, and upon the very atmosphere around it, would fain console itself by dreaming of even an earthly perfectibility. This visionary idea is almost the watchword of those in the present century who seek only the things of the earth. Some of them obscurely, and others openly, talk of man's attaining, by the exertion of his own developed powers, to a state in which the vital principle shall be in each one's own keeping, in which, in other words, each one shall have immortality unless he himself think proper to destroy it. Pelagius, a British monk living in Italy, had no such extravagant theories. He did not rebel against what the Church teaches of death and judgment. He looked not to the body or to time for perfectibility. What his soul, softened and corrupted by voluptuousness, was too proud to assent to, was the doctrine of its own weakness and tendency to evil. Adam's sin, he declared, did not pass, in any way, to his posterity. There was no positive need, he said, of baptism; none of grace: Man's own free will was enough for merit, for sanctity, for heaven. Whispering these ideas to his friends, he found amongst them several willing hearers and devoted followers. Would it be difficult for such a man to find disciples? Is there not in those that habitually follow their pas-

sions, a tendency to become so blinded as, in some points at least, to make their own practice their standard of virtue?—to call vice by some softer name; until they themselves believe it to be either virtue or something but little less praiseworthy? If so (and who has watched the world's doings and not perceived it), then is it no wonder that, glossed over with novelty and a false eloquence, Pelagius's teachings drew thousands into his pernicious errors.*

This heresy found its way even into Britain. Alarmed at its appearance, and yet aware of their inexperience in controversy, the British bishops applied for aid to their Gallic brethren.† A council was, therefore, held at Troyes. It was judged proper that St. German, bishop of Auxerre, and St. Lupus, bishop of Troyes, should go to Britain to refute the heretics. The Council was, no doubt, either directed in its choice, or confirmed in its appointment, by the Holy See; for St. Prosper, a contemporary writer, a Gaul by birth, and secretary to Pope Celestine, declares, in his concise manner, that, “at the suggestion of the Deacon Palladius, Pope Celestine sent German, the bishop of Auxerre, as his legate, in order that, after having confuted the heretics, he may direct the Britons aright in the Catholic faith.”‡ Thus, says the same author, speaking in another part of his works of the conver-

* See acts and letters of the two Councils of Carthage, as well as that of Milevis or Meelah (near Cirta), ap. Labbe, an. 411, 416, &c.; also works of St. Prosper of Aq., Paris, 1711, p. 740. In these Councils Pelagius and his disciple Celestius were formally tried, as usual in such cases, by Scripture, tradition, and reason; and were condemned. Their sentence was ratified by the Pope, Innocent I., who excommunicated the heresiarchs by name.—Ib.

† It is Constantius from whom we learn the message to the Gallic bishops.—See his Life of St. Germ. ap. Boll. July 31, c. v. and vi. His early life was contemporary with the latter years of St. German. His account has been copied almost word for word into that of Venerable Bede. Of his general accuracy there can be no question; but the vague, swelling style into which he often falls, makes one inclined to suspect his judgment.

‡ “Ad actionem Palladii diaconi Papa Celestinus Germanum Antiodorensem vice suâ mittit,” &c.—St. Prosper's works, p. 744; Paris, 1711.

sion of Ireland, as well as of the deliverance of Britain from Pelagianism, thus, Celestine “made the barbarian island Christian, while he endeavoured to preserve the Roman island Catholic.”*

The holy bishops soon arrived, and completely succeeded. At the close of a conference, which the heretics agreed, at last, to hold with them, a blind girl, the daughter of a nobleman, was brought to St. German to be cured. He told them to take her to the Pelagians. “The latter,” says Constantius, “so far from venturing upon the task, joined in the entreaty of the child’s parents.” Then St. German drew from his neck a box of relics, and applied them to the eyes of the child. She immediately recovered her sight. It happened at this time that Britain was no longer a province of the Roman empire. Unable to defend themselves at home, the Romans had abandoned so distant a possession. Aware of the helpless state of the people, the Saxon pirates from the north of Germany had united with the Picts, or wild tribes of North Britain, and were making a desolating inroad upon the south. The invaded people assembled in arms, and implored the two bishops to visit their camp. They complied; and finding, it seems, that the greater part of the army was still Pagan, they instructed and baptized great numbers.† St. Germanus then led them forth, placed them in ambuscade, and gained the great Alleluia victory,—so called from the shout of Alleluia with which the enemy had been received, and which, striking a panic, whether natural or miraculous, into the enemy, was the immediate cause of his total overthrow.

Having then made a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Alban, and having deposited there some relics of

* Ib. Cont. Collat. c. 21, p. 363. Those that imagine that there is any weight whatever in the opinions of Stillingfleet and Collier against the fact of German being Celestine’s legate, should read the able criticism in Toovey’s *Saints’ Lives*, St. Ger. p. 123, &c.

† St. Gildas informs us that the British idols almost surpassed in number those of Egypt. Their hideous lineaments were still, in his own days, to be seen in the ruined cities of the Britons.—Hist. s. 4.

the Apostles and martyrs, and taken, in return, some dust that still seemed to be coloured with St. Alban's blood, they returned to Gaul to their respective sees (A.D. 429).

Eighteen years passed; and again the British bishops sent for aid against the Pelagians. St. Germanus once more appeared amongst them, and again confuted the heretics, and worked miracles. He went back to Gaul, then visited Italy, and there died the death of the just.

During the seven centuries that intervened between his time and the days of Girald Cambrensis, heresy, if we may believe the latter, never again afflicted the Britons or Welsh. They always, he says, persevered in the same doctrine; and, amongst their other pious practices, often went in pilgrimage to Rome, to the tombs of the Apostles.*

Whilst, however, they escaped heresy, they were tired by humiliations. The Jutes, and the Angles, and Saxons landed successively upon all points of the southern and eastern coasts, and won all that part of the island which has ever since been known as England. Their conquest, however, was not completely achieved until after a fearful struggle of a hundred and fifty years. It was the sins of the Britons, if we may believe their countryman, St. Gildas, that drew upon them this heavy chastisement, as they had already drawn upon them, says the same writer, the scorn of surrounding nations.†

* Const. and St. Bede, i. 20 and 21; Ger. Camb. Descrip. Camb. c. 18, p. 891. Giraldus probably meant that no new heresy arose, and that whatever symptoms of Pelagianism afterwards appeared, were speedily removed. For, describing the fervour of the British Church in the time of St. David (sixth century), he says expressly, that the Pelagian heresy beginning to revive, St. David strenuously defended the "Catholic faith in a synod; and again in a second synod ratified the first, obtaining for its decrees the approbation of the Roman pontiff." A portion of these decrees, written by the hand of St. David himself, was legible even in the time of Ricemarch, a bishop of St. David's in the eleventh century.—Whart. ii. p. 646, "Addit.;" Ger. Camb. Vit. St. D. ap. Whart. ii. 628.

† St. Gildas, Hist. ad fin., and both Hist. and Ep. passim.

In the very midst of this sanguinary struggle God's mercy was not altogether withdrawn from the Britons. Whilst he raised up St. Gildas to stimulate the monks, and from the solitude of the cloister to raise his voice against the corruption of the world, he raised up at the same time the great St. David to be a model to his fellow bishops, and to retrieve the fallen discipline of that part of the Church. The synods held for this purpose by St. David were confirmed by the Holy See, and became the guide and rule of all the churches of Wales.*

* “Ex his itaque duabus synodis omnes Cambriæ totius ecclesiæ modum et regulam, ecclesiâ quoque Romanâ auctoritatem adhibente et confirmante, susceperunt.”—(Ger. Camb. Vit. St. D. ap. Whart. t. ii. p. 638, &c.) Giraldus was born in Wales, but not till the twelfth century. He is quoted as the nearest contemporary transmitting to us the traditions of the Welsh, as well as much, undoubtedly, of their authentic history.

CHAPTER IV.

GENERAL STATE OF CHRISTENDOM—ST. GREGORY SENDS ST. AUGUSTINE TO PREACH TO THE ENGLISH—HIS HESITATION, ARRIVAL, AND SUCCESS—REFUSES TO CONVERT BY THE SWORD.

TOWARDS the end of the sixth century, when St. Gregory, justly surnamed the Great, had been placed in the chair of St. Peter, Europe was still convulsed, as it had been for three centuries, with the hostile movements of barbarous races. The Frankish monarchy and the kingdom of the Visigoths in Spain seemed, indeed, to have some stability; but even they were disturbed, on the one hand by civil wars, and on the other by the incursions of the dreaded Huns and Avars, or by the ravages of the fleets of Constantinople. Famine and pestilence, as usual, attended the steps of war. War itself was a scene of almost unmitigated ferocity: the few to whom quarter was given were driven to the slave-market, and often perished by the cruel usage, or sunk at once beneath the battle-axe of a pagan or semi-pagan master.

The island of Britain was not exempt from the horrors of the Continent; the Anglo-Saxons had just penetrated to the very centre of the country, and were smiting down the last scattered tribes of the ancient Britons. Ireland was the only tranquil spot in Europe. There the preaching of Sts. Palladius and Patrick was producing the matured fruits of peace and holiness.

Such was the state of nations when St. Gregory first became pope. To a politician nothing could be more disheartening: to St. Gregory it only caused some additional grief and labour: knowing that he came to do the will of Him that sent him, he did not

trouble himself with human calculations, but put his hand at once to the work; and soon Lombardy, and Spain, and England especially, acknowledged him as their great regenerator.

Before St. Gregory became Pope, he was seized with a vehement desire for the conversion of England. This desire is said to have arisen from a very simple incident. St. Gregory was passing through the Roman market-place, when he was struck by the beautiful countenances and flowing locks of a group of boys. They were slaves offered for sale. The holy man learned that they were Angles, and exclaimed that forms so fair ought to be those of angels.

The thought sunk deep into his mind; and in a short time he was at the feet of the Pope, supplicating that preachers should be sent to the benighted English, and offering to be himself one of the number. The Pope, at first, reluctantly consented, but speedily yielded to the entreaties of the Romans, and recalled the devoted missionary.

When, at last, St. Gregory found himself in the chair of St. Peter, he resolved to gratify his long-cherished desire. In the monastery, over which he himself had formerly been superior, there was a holy monk, named Augustine. This monk was called into the Pope's presence, and was commanded to go and preach to the English. Obedient and simple-minded, St. Augustine assembled his appointed companions, and began his journey. As they proceeded, they received warnings of the incredulous character and savage manners of the Anglo-Saxons, until they seem to have been overcome with terror. They remembered, at the same time, how totally unacquainted they were with the language of the people to whom they were sent. They at length halted,* and resolved to petition for their recall. St. Augustine himself, being their abbot, thought it his own place to lay their petition before

* From St. Gregory's letters to Protas and others, it is evident that St. Augustine had reached Aix, in Provence.—See l. vi. ep. 55, &c.

St. Gregory. The Pope's heart, however, yearned too strongly for the salvation of the Angles to allow him to hesitate. He sent back St. Augustine to his companions, with the following letter :—

“Gregory, the servant of God's servants, to the servants of Our Lord.—Since it were better not to begin what is good, than to let our thoughts turn away from the good which we have begun, you must, my most beloved children, with the utmost zeal complete the good work which, with the help of the Lord, you have begun. Therefore, let neither the toil of the journey, nor the tongues of censorious men deter you ; but with all earnestness and all fervour, bring to completion what God has given you to begin, knowing that great labour is followed by the greater glory of everlasting reward. When Augustine, your chief, whom we make your abbot too, has rejoined you, obey him humbly in everything, knowing that, whatever you fulfil in obedience to his word, will be, in every way, profitable to your souls. May Almighty God protect you by his grace, and give me to see the fruit of your labour in our eternal country ; since, if I cannot also labour with you, I shall be united with you in the joy of reward, because I wish indeed to labour. May God keep you, my most beloved children.”—(July 23, 596.)

St. Augustine immediately hastened back to his companions ; and all, without another word of remonstrance, journeyed on through the kingdoms of France. “The foresight of St. Gregory had provided them with ample recommendations, not only to the bishops and chiefs of the country, but to the celebrated queen, Brunehild, and her two grandsons, who now filled the thrones of Austrasia and Burgundy. Owing to this foresight, they were provided with an additional band of priests acquainted with the Angle dialect, and passed safely through France, although it was then in all the confusion of civil war.”*

* St. Bede, l. i. c. 23, 24, and 25 ; Vit. St. Greg. Joan. diac. &c.

With their numbers increased to about forty, they embarked for the island which they so much dreaded, yet desired, to see ; and anchored safely under the cliffs of the isle of Thanet. The place of their landing is supposed to be Pegwell Bay, where the waters of the Wantsum opened a shorter passage to the Thames, and where the Ramsgate cliffs die away into a level beach, guarded by the massive Roman fortress of Richborough. All has now been changed ; harbours have become choked with the deposits of the sea ; Richborough and Sandwich stand at a considerable distance inland ; and the Wantsum has shrunk until it is scarcely discernible. In the sixth century, however, this stream was half a mile broad, and was the resort of merchants ; and there, accordingly, did the vessel that brought St. Augustine probably anchor.

The little band being thus safely landed, some of the priests that had joined it in France were sent to Ethelbert, the king of Kent, and Bretwalda, or chief lord, of all the kings to the south of the Humber. The messengers told him they had come from Rome, and had brought excellent tidings, which offered, without a shadow of uncertainty, to those that obeyed them, endless joys in heaven, and a kingdom without end with the living and true God. The king gave no direct answer, but ordered them to remain on the isle until he had resolved what to do, supplying them meantime with necessaries. So far the result was favourable : the king had displayed neither surprise nor vexation. Nor is his moderation to be wondered at. His queen, Bertha, was a Catholic, being a Frankish princess ; and she was attended by a bishop, the free exercise of her religion having been one of the marriage articles. Something, then, he must have known of the spirit of Christianity : it remained

ap. Mab. t. i. ; Boll. Mar. 12, &c. Fredeg. Schol. ad an. 596, &c. Ep. of St. Greg. l. viii. 30 ; l. vi. 55, &c. St. Gregory, in his letter (l. vi. 58) to the two kings, alludes briefly to the neglect of the neighbouring bishops in not having preached to the Angles.

to be seen whether he would embrace its self-denying practices.*

When some days had elapsed, Ethelbert crossed the Wantsum, and having sent for the strangers, sat down in the open air as a precaution against the use of magic. In obedience to the royal summons, St. Augustine and his companions soon drew near, walking in procession, with the cross at their head, and carrying a picture of our Saviour, and pouring out the solemn chant of the Litany, "for the eternal salvation of themselves, as well as of those for whose sake they had come."

At the king's bidding, they sat down, and "preached the word of life," and announced the good tidings, not to him only, but to all the assembly. The king replied: "Your words and promises are, indeed, truly splendid; but, as they are new and uncertain, I cannot give them my assent, nor abandon what I, together with all the race of the Angles, have so long observed. Still, since you, being foreigners, have travelled to this place, from a great distance, and since, as it appears to me, you have manifestly desired to communicate to us, likewise, what you believed to be true and excellent, we will not be unfriendly to you; but, on the contrary, we are taking measures to receive you with a liberal hospitality, and to furnish you with all things necessary for your support; nor do we hinder you from uniting by your preaching, as many as possible to the faith of your religion." Having then appointed them a residence in the city of Canterbury, his capital, Ethelbert departed, and the assembly broke up.

"It is said," adds Venerable Bede, with his usual caution, "that, when approaching the city, according to their custom, with the holy cross and the image of the Great King, our Lord Jesus Christ, they chanted the following supplication: 'We beseech thee, O Lord, in thy abundant mercy, to take away

* St. Bede, l. i. c. 25.

thy wrath and indignation from this city, and from thy holy house, because we are sinners : Alleluia !' ”*

Outside the city, towards the east, there is still a small church of rude workmanship, once dedicated to St. Martin, and still bearing his name. This was originally built by the ancient Britons, when the Romans were still in this country ; and in this it was that Ethelbert's queen used to hear mass. In this simple building, St. Augustine and his companions said mass, chanted, and prayed, and preached, in watching and fasting, ready to endure all things, and even to lay down their lives “for that truth which they preached.” “Wondering at the simplicity of their innocent life, and the sweetness of their heavenly teaching,” some of the natives believed and were baptized. Ethelbert himself was deeply moved. He saw that the strangers themselves practised what they taught ; and he saw that they proved the truth of what they taught by many public miracles.† He acknowledged himself convinced, and was baptized. His subjects thronged to hear the teaching that had thus changed their king ; and multitudes were speedily converted. Ethelbert rejoiced that so many were enrolled with him as fellow-citizens of heaven. He even thought, it appears, of compelling the rest of his subjects to follow their example ; but he submitted to the caution of his instructors in the faith, that the service of Christ ought not to be compulsory, but free.

* St. Bede, l. i. c. 25.

† “Quæ vera esse miraculorum quoque multorum *ostensione* firmaverant,” &c.—(St. Bede, l. i. c. 26.) Nor is this account of their miracles a mere tradition. St. Gregory himself not only mentions them in a letter to Eulogius, bishop of Alexandria (l. viii. ep. 30, ap. Maurists), but thought it necessary to write a letter for the express purpose of cautioning St. Augustine to beware of the vain-glory to which the gift of miracles might expose him. “I know, most dear brother,” the letter begins, “that Almighty God has through you shown great miracles to the nation which he has willed to choose,” &c.—(Ap. St. B. l. i. c. 31.) In another part he says : “The souls of the Angles are drawn by exterior miracles to interior grace,” &c. The epitaph upon his tomb, preserved by St. Bede, is a contemporary, and therefore incontrovertible, voucher : “Supported by God with the working of miracles”—“A Deo operatione miraculorum suffultus.”—Lib. ii. c. 3.

CHAPTER V.

CONSECRATION OF ST. AUGUSTINE—HIS MESSAGE TO ST. GREGORY
—THE POPE'S DIRECTIONS FOR THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH
IN ENGLAND—THE SECOND BAND OF MISSIONARIES—LETTERS OF
ST. GREGORY TO SS. MELLITUS AND AUGUSTINE—DEATH OF
ST. GREGORY.

THUS far successful in his mission, St. Augustine, in obedience to previous instructions, went for consecration to St. Virgilius, the archbishop of Arles and legate of the Holy See. Having speedily returned to the little church which he had founded, he despatched two of his companions, Lawrence and Peter, to inform the Pope of his consecration, and to procure answers to various important questions. Some of these answers afford a considerable insight into the first rough draft of the English Church.

In reply to St. Augustine's questions regarding the manner of life which the bishop and his clergy ought to follow, as well as the application of the offerings of the faithful, St. Gregory referred him to St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy, and then reminded him, in answer to the second part of his inquiry, that it was the custom of the Apostolic See to command bishops to divide the offerings into four portions: one for the bishop and his household, and for the duties of hospitality; a second for the clergy; a third for the poor; and the fourth for repairing churches. He added, that St. Augustine, being well acquainted with the rules of monastic life, ought not to live apart from the clergy in the Church of the Angles; but ought to establish that method of life, which, added the Pope, "our Fathers followed at the very birth of the Church," all things being in common. If any surplus remained, it should be given to the poor, "according

to the teaching of our Lord, the Master of all ; “but yet that which remaineth, give alms ; and behold, all things are clean unto you.”*

St. Augustine, in the second place, having remarked that, although there was one faith, there were various usages, St. Gregory reminded him that he knew the usages of the Roman Church ; but he, notwithstanding, empowered him to select carefully, from all the Churches, whatever he thought best, and having completed this selection, to make it the established usage of the Church of the Angles.

If any one steals anything from a church, what should be his punishment ? was the third interrogatory.

According to the person’s circumstances, was the answer. Some may be driven to this sin by poverty ; others, who have abundance, fall into it ; and, therefore, it should be punished accordingly ; sometimes with fines, sometimes with stripes, but never in passion. Good fathers inflict pain upon their children when in fault, yet make them their heirs. The same charity should always be made the rule of correction ; so that the mind may never go beyond the rules of reason.

Having declared, in answer to St. Augustine’s fourth question, that two brothers may marry two sisters, the Pope thus answered the fifth : “Marriage should not take place within the third or fourth degrees of kindred.† Since, however, many of the Angles have married either their stepmother or their brother’s wife, let them be cautioned to abstain from such revolting marriages, and to regard them as grievous sins. Let them fear the tremendous judgment of God, lest, for carnal joys, they incur the

* For an exemplification of the manner in which this injunction was fulfilled, see the account of St. Aidan, in Chapter VIII.

† This, as the tenor of the answer shows, and as St. Gregory says expressly in his reply to Felix of Messana (l. xiv. ep. 17), was merely an exception—an indulgence for the time, suitable to the weak faith of recent converts. It was the general discipline of the Church in that age to forbid marriage within the seventh degree : “usque ad septimam generationem.”

torments of eternal anguish. Still, let them not, on this account, be deprived of the communion of the sacred body and blood of the Lord, lest those marriages should seem to be punished, in which they were bound, through ignorance, before the laver of baptism. For, at this time, the Holy Church corrects some things by fervour, tolerates some things by mildness, passes over some things by prudence; and so bears and passes over, as oftentimes by bearing and passing over, to restrain, the evil which is against her. If, however, any that received the faith, dare to contract any such marriage, let them be deprived of the communion of the body and blood of the Lord."

If, on account of the distance, the bishops cannot meet together, is one bishop sufficient for the consecration of another?

"Since, in the Church of the Angles, you are the only bishop," replied St. Gregory, "and those from Gaul do not visit you, you must by yourself consecrate other bishops. But when they are consecrated, they should by no means be at a considerable distance from one another; and then, in future consecrations, three or four bishops should always be present."

How shall we act with regard to the bishops of Gaul and Britain?

Answer: "We give you no authority over the bishops of Gaul. The bishop of Arles, from very early times of my predecessors, has always received the pallium. With him, then, you must treat, if you wish to repress any lukewarmness or vice in the bishops of Gaul. Yet, by persuasive words and good example lead to the pursuit of holiness, as it is written in the Law: 'If thou go into thy friend's corn, thou mayst break the ears, and rub them in thy hand, but not reap them with a sickle.' On the other hand, we commit to your charge all the bishops of Britain, that those that are unlearned may be taught; those that are weak, strengthened by persuasion; those that are perverse, corrected by authority."

As St. Augustine had represented to the Pope that the harvest was great, but the labourers few, St. Gregory sent back, along with the bishop's messengers, a little band of heroes, whose names in every English heart ought to be second only to those of St. Gregory and St. Augustine. These were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus. The Pope committed to their care, for the infant Church, some relics of the apostles and martyrs, vestments, many books and vessels, and furniture and ornaments for churches and altars.* He likewise sent to St. Augustine the pallium, the badge of archiepiscopal jurisdiction, with the following letter :—

“Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to his most reverend and holy brother Augustine, his fellow-bishop.—Although it is certain that the unutterable rewards of the eternal kingdom are stored up for those that labour for Almighty God, we must, nevertheless, grant them honours, that they may find in the reward a means of toiling much more in the earnestness of their spiritual work. And since, by the Lord's mercy and your labour, the new Church of the Angles has been finally led to the grace of Almighty God, we grant you, but only when celebrating the solemnities of mass, the use of the pallium in the said Church ; so that you ordain twelve bishops, one for each place, who are to be under your authority ; so that the bishop of London is ever after to be consecrated in a special synod, and to receive the pallium of honour from this holy and apostolical See, where, by God's appointment, I am serving.† We wish you to send

* St. Bede, l. i. c. 27—29.

† It appears strange that London and York should be mentioned by the Pope, and Canterbury passed over in silence.

William of Malmesbury says (in explanation) that Canterbury was a place unknown to the Romans, and that London therefore was named as the archiepiscopal see.—(De Gest. Pont. l. i. ad init.) We can hardly adopt such a solution. Radulf, St. Anselm's successor, in a clear and very learned epistle to Pope Callixtus II., shows that John the Deacon, in his Life of St. Gregory (written long before any discussion arose), states that St. Gregory commanded St. Augus-

as bishop to the city of York, any one whom you think proper to ordain, with this proviso, that if the said city and the adjoining country receives the Word of God, he likewise may ordain twelve bishops and enjoy the honour of a metropolitan : because, if life remains to us, we intend, with the aid of the Lord, to grant him the pallium. Yet do we will that he be subject to you. After your death, let him preside over the bishops whom he will have ordained, so as not in any way to be under the authority of the bishop of London. Let there afterwards be between the bishops of London and York this distinction of honour, that he rank first who was ordained first. Let them arrange unanimously with common counsel and united action, all that should be done for the zeal of Christ : let them form upright opinions, and let them reduce these opinions to practice without recrimination.

“ Let your brothership have subject to you, by the will of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, not only those bishops whom you will have ordained, nor those only who will have been ordained by the bishop of York, but also all the bishops of Britain : inasmuch as in your teaching and the holiness of your life, they may see the model both of true belief and of good life, and discharging their duty in faith and morals, may, when it shall please God, arrive at the kingdom of heaven. May God preserve you, most reverend brother.”—(June, A.D. 601.)

When the messengers and their companions had gone, St. Gregory despatched a letter to the abbot Mellitus, “ in which,” remarks St. Bede, “ he plainly shows how earnest was his vigilance for the salvation of our country.”

“ After the departure of our congregation which is with you, we became exceedingly anxious because no tidings happened to reach us concerning the successful prosecution of your journey. When, therefore,

tine to ordain twelve bishops for Kent under his own metropolis, as well as twelve for London and twelve for York.—Ap. Wilk. Concil. i. p. 398.

Almighty God shall have led you to the most reverend man, our brother Augustine, the bishop, tell him that which I have resolved upon, thinking long with myself, about the Angles, viz. that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not by any means to be destroyed; but let the idols in them be destroyed; let water be blessed, and be sprinkled in the said temples; let altars be constructed; let relics be set up: because, if the temples are well built, they ought to be changed from the worship of devils to the service of the true God, in order that, whilst the nation sees that its said temples are not destroyed, they may put away error from their hearts, and acknowledging and adoring the true God, may more easily flock to the places which they have been accustomed to frequent. And as they have been accustomed to slay many oxen in sacrifice to devils, some festivity must be substituted for this likewise; so that, on the day of the Dedication or of the Feasts of the holy martyrs whose relics are kept there, let them make bowers around those churches that have been changed from temples, and let them keep the festival with religious banquets, and no longer sacrifice animals to the devil, but, in their own eating, kill animals to the praise of God, and let them give thanks to the Giver of all things for their fulness; so that, whilst some joys are reserved to them externally, they may more easily give their minds to interior joys. For there is no doubt that it is impossible to cut off all things at once from hardened minds, since even he who strives to ascend to the highest place rises by steps or paces, and not by leaps. Thus, in Egypt the Lord made himself known, indeed, to the people of Israel; but, nevertheless, the use of the sacrifices which they were accustomed to offer to the devil, he reserved to them in his own worship, so as to command them to offer animals in his sacrifice; forasmuch as with their change of heart they would lose one thing of the sacrifice, but retain another, as although they were the same animals which they were accustomed to offer;

nevertheless, by offering them to God and not to idols, they were no longer the same sacrifices. May God protect you, my most dear son."

Soon after sending this epistle, St. Gregory heard with joy of the great miracles wrought by St. Augustine, and of the rapid extension of the one fold. Remembering, however, and compassionating the weakness of human nature, he wrote to him the following letter:—

"Gregory to Augustine, the bishop of the Angles-English.—Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will. Because the grain of wheat falling into the earth has died, that it might not reign alone in heaven; by whose death we live, by whose weakness we are strengthened, by whose suffering we are rescued from suffering, by whose love we sought brethren in Britain whom we knew not, by whose bounty we have found those whom we sought without knowing them. But who can sufficiently express how great a joy has sprung up in the hearts of all the faithful, because by the work of Almighty God's grace, and by the labours of your brothership, the darkness of error having been scattered, the light of the holy faith has been poured upon the English nation; because with a most sound understanding it now tramples upon the idols to which before it was subject in senseless fear; because it prostrates before Almighty God with a pure heart; because it is secured from the stumblings of wickedness by the rules of holy preaching; because in spirit it is subject to the divine commands, and in understanding is raised; because in prayer it humbles itself to the very earth, that in mind it may not rest upon the earth. Whose work is this, but of Him who says—'My Father worketh even till now; and I work;'* who chose unlettered preachers to be sent into the world, in order to show the world that it was converted not by the wisdom of men but by his power;

* John, c. v. v. 17.

doing this even now, because amongst the English nation he has deigned to work mighty things by weak men. But in this heavenly gift, O most dear brother, there is reason not only for great joy, but for very great fear. I know, most dear brother, that through you Almighty God has displayed great miracles in the nation which he willed to choose; therefore, with regard to that same celestial gift you must both rejoice with fear, and fear with rejoicing; that is, rejoice because the souls of the English are drawn by exterior miracles to interior grace; but fear, lest amidst the wonders which are wrought, the weak soul may become elated in its presumption, and by that very means by which outwardly it was raised to honour, it may inwardly fall by vain-glory. For we must remember that the Disciples when returning with joy from preaching, when they said, 'Lord, the devils also are subject to us in Thy name,' immediately received for answer, 'Rejoice not in this that spirits are subject unto you, but rejoice in this that your names are written in heaven.' "

The epistle then warns St. Augustine to keep in remembrance whatever sins he may have committed; tells him that the gift of miracles was given not for his own sake, but for others; reminds him of the example of Moses, chosen by God, and working miracles without number, yet, for one act of diffidence, which had been committed thirty-eight years before, dying ere he could lead the people into the promised land; proves to him that even the reprobate have worked miracles; and lastly, gives him confidence that his sins have indeed been forgiven; that he who has laboured so much to gain souls, will not himself be lost; and closes in the same triumphant strain with which it began.*

While St. Gregory maintained this correspondence with St. Augustine, he wrote likewise to Bertha and Ethelbert, to congratulate with them, and to hold up to their imitation the examples of Helena and Con-

* Ep. of St. Greg. lib. xi. ep. 28; Paris, 1705.

stantine. Having thus directed the efforts of the missionaries, and laid the foundation of the hierarchy, this indefatigable Pope went to the reward of his labours in the year of our Lord 604.*

* St. Bede, lib. i. c. 32 ; lib. ii. c. 1.

CHAPTER VI.

CHURCHES FOUNDED AT CANTERBURY—ST. AUGUSTINE'S CONFERENCE WITH THE BRITISH PRELATES—HIS DEATH AND EPITAPH—ST. LAWRENCE SUCCEEDS IN THE CHAIR OF CANTERBURY—AFFLICTED STATE OF THE CHURCH—THE BISHOPS RESOLVE TO ABANDON THE COUNTRY—VISION AND CHASTISEMENT OF ST. LAWRENCE—ST. MELLITUS—THE POPE CONSOLES ST. JUSTUS.

ST. AUGUSTINE, meantime, supported by Ethelbert's authority, recovered a church which the faithful, in the time of the Romans, had built in Canterbury. It had probably been desecrated: at all events, he "consecrated it in the name of the Holy Saviour, our God and Lord Jesus Christ." He there fixed a residence for himself and his successors. To the east, not far from the city, he also erected a monastery in which Ethelbert built, from the foundations, the Church of SS. Peter and Paul.*

While thus successful in Kent, St. Augustine occasionally, if we are to believe William of Malmesbury, journeyed to and fro throughout all the states that acknowledged the authority of Ethelbert.† This authority extended over all the Anglo-Saxon states to the south of the Humber. It seems to have been during one of these journeys that St. Augustine invited to a conference the bishops of the nearest province of the Britons. The territory thus alluded to was that of the Huicci, in the valley of the Severn, and stretching to the north and west of Gloucester, a city which, at that time, was perhaps the most advanced post of the West Saxons. A century afterwards, when Venerable Bede was living, the place of meeting

* St. Bede, l. i. c. 33; and ii. c. 3.

† De Gest. Pont. l. ii. p. 250, ap. Savile.

was still known, as probably it is to this day, as Augustine's Oak.*

Two meetings were there held. In the first of these the subject discussed was that of the day on which Easter should be kept.

The Jews were commanded to keep the Pasch or Pass-over on the fourteenth of the first month at evening. This first month corresponded to the latter part of our March, and the first part of our April. The Christian Pasch, however, was, by a general and undoubtedly Apostolic custom, observed not exactly on the fourteenth day, but on the Sunday following, in veneration of the most solemn of our feasts, the Resurrection of our Lord. Here a discrepancy arose. In the middle of the second century, it was found that the churches of part of Asia Minor kept it on the fourteenth day itself. Pope Victor threatened them with excommunication; but eventually, for the sake of peace, their custom was tolerated. In the year 325, a general council met at Nice, in Asia Minor, to condemn Arius; and, amongst other matters, laid down a law for the observance of Easter.

Easter was to be kept in the first month. This first month was to be known by its fourteenth day being either upon, or the next after, the Vernal Equinox. The *Sunday* following that fourteenth day was to be the day for keeping Easter, the Christian Pasch. In order that astronomical disputes might not render uncertain the day of the Vernal Equinox itself,

* With regard to this interesting conference, it may be asked, How far we are to depend upon St. Bede's account? His account, certainly, is not contemporary, St. Bede being in the prime of life about ninety or a hundred years after it took place. Yet such a meeting was too interesting a subject to be easily forgotten; and it can hardly be conceived that no account of it was committed to writing. Nor has it ever been proved that the Anglo-Saxons of those days falsified their doctrines or traditions for the triumph of a party. On the other hand, the veracity and research of St. Bede himself have never been called in question. We must therefore conclude that the substance of St. Bede's narrative may be depended upon.

it was decided that that day should always be reckoned as falling on the 21st of March.

This decree was immediately obeyed by the whole Church. An inconsiderable body of disobedient men chose to become schismatics by still keeping the same day as the Jews. Persisting in their disobedience, they were cut off from the Church, and formed the petty sect called the "Fourteenth-day Men," or Quartodecimans.

Although, however, the feast was now kept by the whole Church on a Sunday, there were several terms in the canon which were still open to two interpretations, and which soon, therefore, led to errors in calculation, and consequently in practice. These terms were, "the fourteenth day," and the "21st of March;" it becoming a question whether to include or exclude these days from the calculation.

Before the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons, Easter was kept on the same Sunday amongst the Britons as at Rome. During the subsequent wars with their successful invaders, the Britons seem to have remained unconscious that Rome had amended its calculation. They continued, therefore, the method which the Holy See had thrown aside as imperfect.*

This was the first subject of discussion at Augustine's Oak. The meeting, however, led to no result. St. Augustine in vain reasoned, entreated, reproved. He, at length, says St. Bede, "put an end to this long and laborious debate by saying, 'Let us implore God, who makes men of one mind, in the house of his Father, to vouchsafe to show us, by miracles from heaven, the tradition that is to be followed, the ways by which we are to make a speedy entrance into his

* *L'Art de Vérifier les Dates*: "Paschal Cycle." Sti. Amb. ep. xxiii. (al. 83); Venice, 1751. Eus. Vita Const. l. iii. c. 5, 17, &c.; and Notes to C. of Nice, ap. Labbe, tom. ii. pp. 68, 69; Hist. Eus. l. v. c. 23, &c.; vii. c. 20. St. Bede (l. ii. c. 2) expressly states that the Britons who met at Augustine's Oak used the cycle of eighty-four years. This, as every one knows, was the cycle formerly used at Rome.—See also Lupus Can. Concil. Nic. c. 6. p. 275; Venice, 1724.

kingdom. Let a sick man be brought here, and let the faith and practice of the person by whom he shall be cured be considered devout to God and necessary to be followed by all.' ”

The proposal was reluctantly accepted. A blind man of English race was accordingly led in. He was taken first to the British prelates, and found no remedy. He was then taken to St. Augustine. Kneeling down, the converter of the English besought “the Father of our Lord Jesus” at once to give corporal sight to the blind man, and by his cure to heal the spiritual blindness of the Britons. His prayer was heard: the man’s eyes were opened; and the Britons acknowledged that St. Augustine’s was the true way of justice. They requested, however, “a second synod,” alleging that they could not depart from the ancient usages without the consent of their countrymen.

This having been agreed upon, seven British bishops, “it is said,”* and several very learned men assembled at the celebrated monastery of Bangor, the residence, it appears, of more than two thousand monks. There they consulted a religious, who was famed for sanctity and prudence, and who was living apart from his brethren as a hermit. The prudence of this hermit’s reply was scarcely equal to his reputation. At first he said, wisely enough, “If he be a man of God, follow him.” When they asked him how they were to know that he was a man of God, he replied: “If he is meek and humble of heart.” Not yet satisfied, they asked how they were to know this. Now came the final reply: “Take care that he [St. Augustine] and his people arrive first at the place of meeting, and if, at your approach, he rises, hear him obediently, knowing that he is a servant of Christ. But if he slights you, and does not rise before you, although you are more in number, let him also be slighted by you.” It is

* In the account of what the Britons did just before this second synod, St. Bede is careful, in two distinct places, to warn the reader that it is only a tradition: “ut perhibent,” “ut fertur.”

obvious that the merest accident might cause St. Augustine to rise or remain sitting; and that it was not for prudent men to leave an important decision to such an accident. This, however (if, indeed, this account of the hermit be trustworthy), the British prelates determined to do.

St. Augustine on their arrival remained seated. Full of anger, they began to oppose everything. At last he said: "Although in many respects you act contrary to our usage, indeed to that of the universal Church, yet, if you will obey me in three things, so as to keep Easter at its proper time; so as to make complete, according to the custom of the Holy Roman and Apostolical Church, the administration of baptism by which we are born again to God;* and so as to preach together with us the Word of the Lord to the English nation, we will tolerate all your other practices, although contrary to our usages." Clinging, however, to their first determination, they replied that they would do nothing of the kind, and would not consider him as their archbishop. This new kind of disobedience being no other than open schism, aroused his zeal. "Threatening them, it is said, the man of the Lord, Augustine, predicted that, if they would not have peace with their brethren, they should have war from their enemies; and that, if they would not preach the way of life to the English nation, they should suffer at their hands the punishment of death."† Thus the proceedings terminated.

* By giving the sacrament of confirmation immediately after baptism.—See Rom. Rit. de Sacr. Bapt. ad fin.

† Spelman, in his *Concilia*. It is painful to find a man like Wilkins, the editor of the "Councils of Great Britain and Ireland," make a statement so totally contrary to Ven. Bede's account, and to every other fragment of genuine history, as the following:—"When thus anew the Christian religion had received a happy increase in Kent, under the Saxon king, many bishops dispersed in various parts of England and Wales joined Augustine and his companions."—(Dedication, tom. i.) For this statement, important as it is, he does not attempt to quote an authority!

Both Spelman and Wilkins have published from the Cotton MSS. a reply supposed to have been made to St. Augustine by the abbot

About ten or twelve years after this synod, "when St. Augustine had now been long since taken to the heavenly kingdom, the prediction was literally fulfilled." There was then a king in Northumbria, named Ædilfrid, who was a pagan, like all his subjects, and was renowned for his successful wars with the Britons, and for his complete victory at Degsastan over the Scots or Irish "who dwell in Britain." This warrior had now penetrated as far as Chester, and there arrayed his forces against the Britons. When about to engage, he saw a crowd of men standing somewhat apart. With the foresight of an experienced leader, he inquired who they were, and what they were doing? The crowd that thus attracted his attention consisted of a considerable number of the monks of Bangor, who had there assembled to pray for victory. When Ædilfrid heard this, he exclaimed: "If they cry to their God against us, they too, by attacking us with hostile prayers, fight against us, although they do not carry arms." So saying, he turned the first shock of the battle against them. Their guard fled. They themselves, unarmed and defenceless, met with no compassion. About twelve hundred of them, it is said, were butchered; scarcely fifty escaping.*

of Bangor. It is a vague and unsatisfactory production. It is thus disposed of by Stevenson, the Protestant editor of St. Bede's History:—"It is obviously the production of a comparatively recent period, probably not earlier than Henry VII., and consequently not entitled to the slightest credit."—Note of Stevenson, editor of the edition of St. B.'s Hist. published by the Historical Society (1838), p. 102.

* St. Bede, l. i. c. 34; and l. ii. c. 2, s. 94. Stevenson, the editor, has the following remarks upon the closing sentence of this chapter:—"The omission in the Saxon version of the passage from 'quamvis' to 'sublato,' has given a pretext for supposing that it has been interpolated into the original for the purpose of exonerating Augustine from the blame which, it is stated, might be attached to him in consequence of this slaughter of the monks of Bangor. But the MSS. universally exhibit this passage, and no inference can be drawn from its omission in the Saxon paraphrase, since that version varies from the original in numerous minute particulars."—Note to p. 103.

About the time of his discussion with the British prelates, St. Augustine had consecrated two suffragan bishops, SS. Mellitus and Justus. The former was to preach to the East Saxons, or inhabitants of Essex. The capital of this small kingdom was London, even then the centre of a great trade, "both by land and sea." In this city, accordingly, as soon as the province submitted to the preaching of St. Mellitus, Ethelbert erected for him, as his cathedral, the church of St. Paul. St. Justus was made bishop of Hrof's Town, or Rochester. In this place Ethelbert erected the cathedral of St. Andrew the Apostle. He also gave ample presents to the three bishops, besides estates and possessions for the use of the Episcopal clergy.

St. Augustine's death occurred soon after the consecration of his two suffragans (A.D. 605). He was at first buried outside the Church of SS. Peter and Paul. When, however, the church was finished and dedicated (A.D. 613), his body was removed to the northern portico, which was intended to be the burial-place of all the archbishops of Canterbury and kings of Kent. The following epitaph was engraved upon his tomb: "Here rests Domnus Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, who, being formerly sent hither by Gregory, the bishop of the Roman city; and being supported by God with the working of miracles, led King Ethelbert and his nation from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ, and having finished in peace the days of his mission, died on the seventh of the calends of June, during the reign of the same king."*

St. Augustine's successor in the see of Canterbury was St. Lawrence. This bishop had been consecrated during the lifetime of his predecessor,† for

* St. Bede, ii. c. 3.

† In this, adds Ven. Bede, "he followed the example of the most blessed Peter, the prince of the Apostles, who, having founded the Church of Christ at Rome, is stated to have consecrated Clement to be at once his assistant in preaching and his successor" (ii. 4).

fear that the English Church, while as yet scarcely formed, might be left without a pastor. Under his zealous administration the infant Church for some years continued to increase; but a severe trial was soon to befall it. Ethelbert of Kent and Saberct or Saba, the first Christian king of Essex, died nearly at the same time. Their sons had always clung to paganism, and now more openly practised their superstitious rites, giving full permission to their subjects to follow their example.* There are always great numbers to be found who look no farther than the interests of the present moment. Not a few of this character had received baptism to curry favour with their former kings, and now as easily thronged to the debasing worship rendered by their new sovereigns.

As if to give a new proof of his paganism, Eadbald of Kent contracted one of the marriages so strongly condemned by St. Gregory, by marrying the widow of his father, Ethelbert.† The three sons of Saberct of Essex caused the Christians scarcely less affliction. They thrust themselves, it would seem, more than once, into St. Paul's during the celebration of mass, and there "are said" to have cried out: "Why do you not give us that beautiful bread which you used to give to our father Saba, and which you do not cease to give still to the people in the church?" "If you would be washed in that saving font in which your father was washed," replied St. Mellitus, "you also can be partakers of the holy bread of which he partook; but, if you condemn the laver of life, you can by no means obtain the bread of life." "We will not enter that font, because we know we have no need of it; but yet we will eat that bread."

* It might almost seem, from what is said of their more openly practising their superstitions, and permitting their subjects to do so too, that the worship of idols had already been prohibited by law. Such an inference, however, would, perhaps, be incorrect. St. Bede assures us that Earconberct, who reigned from A.D. 640 to A.D. 664, was "the first king of the English that ordered" the "idols to be forsaken and destroyed" (iii. c. 8).

† Ethelbert's former queen, Bertha, having been dead some time.

The bishop remonstrated, and strove to make them understand that "without the most holy purification it could by no means be, that any one should communicate in the most holy oblation." Full of rage for his firm refusal, they thrust him and his out of their kingdom.

The holy exile hastened immediately to SS. Lawrence and Justus; and all three determined to leave the island. St. Justus and St. Mellitus actually departed, but paused on the shores of France to watch the course of events. When the eve of St. Lawrence's departure had arrived, intending to spend as much of the night as possible in prayer, he ordered a couch to be laid in the church of SS. Peter and Paul, on which he might repose, when overpowered with sleep.

On the following morning, however, instead of hastening to France, he presented himself before King Eadbald. Whatever the pagan's surprise, it was soon greatly increased; for, throwing back his garment, St. Lawrence displayed innumerable lacerated wounds, evidently caused by a most severe scourging.* The astonished king demanded who had dared to inflict such blows upon such a man. St. Lawrence then mentioned his watch in the church on the previous night; and added that in the midst of his prayers and tears, the Prince of the Apostles appeared to him, and demanding why he was going to abandon to the wolves, the flock which he himself had intrusted to him, smote him with sharp scourges, yet reminding him, for his consolation, of the crown with Christ, which he himself (St. Peter) had won by suffering all things, and death itself, for the little ones of Christ.

Struck with fear, Eadbald renounced his idolatry and revolting marriage, and became a fervent Christian. He reinstated St. Justus in the see of Rochester. He failed, however, to persuade the Londoners to receive St. Mellitus. His power, unlike that of his

* Lib. ii. c. 5.

father, was limited to the kingdom of Kent. All that he could do for St. Mellitus, was to extend to him his hospitality.

The exiled Bishop consecrated the church "of the Holy Mother of God," which Eadbald had built. Soon after, when St. Lawrence had "ascended to the heavenly kingdom," St. Mellitus became Archbishop of Canterbury. He was now of infirm health, being troubled with the gout, but was not the less active in mind, whilst he was remarkable for contempt of the things of this world, and for the earnestness of his endeavours to merit those of heaven. The people of Canterbury loved to tell how, by his prayers, he had extinguished a vast conflagration, which threatened the destruction of the cathedral and entire city. His body was laid in its last sleep beside his dear fellow-labourers, St. Lawrence and St. Augustine. St. Justus succeeded him.*

This bishop had now for many years been watching and unsparingly labouring, yet the fruit seemed scarcely to correspond to his toil, or to its first promise. The opposite bank of the Thames, on which his eyes so often rested, was still faithless to grace. Nowhere else had the English received the faith: its precious seed was still strewn upon only one corner of the island. Yet, leaving times and seasons to the heavenly husbandman, St. Justus pursued with unshaken faith and patience, his quiet routine of duty.

His heroic constancy drew upon him the well-merited encomiums of Pope Boniface V. His holiness sent him the pallium, directing him to consecrate bishops, as occasion required, for the complete conversion, not only of the people of Kent, but of the surrounding nations.† The very next year after this letter

* St. B. l. ii. c. 6, 7, and 8.

† Ep. of Pope B. ap. St. Bede, ii. c. 8. The pallium is worn as a mark that the Pope has conferred upon the bishop who wears it some especial jurisdiction. It is especially the badge of an archbishop. It gives him a portion of the Pope's plenitude of power, conferring upon him what is often called the plenitude of episcopal

was penned, the light of faith broke upon several different parts of England. It was, indeed, very soon overclouded, but it finally broke forth in meridian splendour.

jurisdiction; so that he who by consecration is no more than any other bishop, may be able to hold a synod, and to discharge all the duties of an archbishop.—See the Rom. Pontifical; and Zallinger, *Instit. Jur. Eccl.* l. i. tit. 8.

CHAPTER VII.

EDWIN OF NORTHUMBRIA — ST. PAULINUS — POPE BONIFACE'S EXHORTATION—THE WITENA-GEMOTE AT GODMUNDHAM—CONVERSION OF EDWIN—ST. PETER'S AT YORK—ST. FELIX, THE APOSTLE OF EAST ANGLIA—INVASION OF NORTHUMBRIA, AND DEATH OF EDWIN—VICTORY OF ST. OSWALD.

THE throne of the Northumbrians (the people on the north of the Humber) was now filled by a king named Edwin. Except Kent, and perhaps the southern Picts (the men of Galloway), the whole of the English and British principalities, as far as the borders of the Picts and Scots, beyond the Friths of Forth and Clyde, as well as the isles of Anglesea and Man, acknowledged the sway of this mighty Bretwalda. Such an extent of power was as yet unprecedented in the annals of the English.

This king sent to Eadbald of Kent, to demand his sister Ethelberga in marriage. The reply was brief: a Christian virgin could not marry a pagan, lest the faith and sacraments of the heavenly king should be profaned by an alliance with one, who was totally ignorant of the worship of the true God.* Edwin was not offended with this candid declaration; but, on the contrary, promised that Ethelberga and her attendants and priests should have the free exercise of their religion; and, moreover, that he himself would examine the grounds of their belief, and, if satisfied, would himself become a Christian. On these terms Eadbald consented. The conversion from paganism was so recent, however, that even Ethelberga and her attendants might be contaminated by the society of the pagans. To avert this danger, St. Paulinus was consecrated bishop, to accompany them,

* St. Bede, ii. c. 5, sect. 100; c. 9, sect. 110.

and to "strengthen them," says Venerable Bede, "by daily exhortation, and the celebration of the heavenly sacraments." This Paulinus, it may be remembered, was one of the companions of SS. Mellitus and Justus when St. Gregory despatched to England his second band of missionaries. Before his departure, he was consecrated bishop by his friend, St. Justus. On his arrival in Northumbria, he exerted himself strenuously, but fruitlessly, to convert the idolaters (A.D. 625).*

In the following year, an unexpected train of events opened the way for numerous conversions. Edwin was holding his court at a royal "villa," somewhere on the river Derwent, when a messenger from the king of the West Saxons was introduced. When this man had engaged the attention of Edwin, he suddenly started up, and drawing from under his garments a two-edged dirk, rushed upon him. Lilla, one of the thanes, had just time to throw himself between them, when the dirk passed through his body into that of the king. The assassin fell beneath the swords of the assembled thanes, but not until he had made another victim.

That same night, the queen was brought to bed of a daughter, and Edwin (whose wound was not very severe) was giving thanks to his gods for the birth of the child, when Paulinus, who was present, began to thank Christ the Lord, and to assure the king that, by his prayers, he had obtained from Christ the queen's safe and easy delivery. Pleased with his discourse, Edwin promised that if Christ would give him life and victory in his war against the king of Wessex, who had attempted his assassination, he would serve him and renounce his idols. As an assurance of this, he allowed St. Paulinus, on the eve of the following Whit-Sunday, to baptize the child, "together with eleven others of his household."

He returned from the war safe and victorious; and henceforth he never again bent his knee to idols. Before completely fulfilling his promise by serving

* Ib. i. c. 29, sect. 72; and ii.

Christ, he deliberated long and anxiously. Sometimes he sought from St. Paulinus the reasons for believing; sometimes he consulted with his wisest councillors; and oftentimes meditated deeply what religion deserved to be finally embraced.

While thus engaged, or rather some little time previously, he received a letter from Boniface V. It was one of the last acts of this zealous pope. He had long been watching the progress of events in Northumbria, as earnestly as his predecessor, St. Gregory, had watched those of Kent. Being undoubtedly acquainted with the terms of the marriage treaty of Edwin and his queen, and knowing that the king had not as yet shown any inclination to keep his promise of examining into the grounds of the Christian religion, he wrote to inform him that he had sent a bishop to announce to him the Christian faith; he pointed out to him the folly of auguries and of idols, "which have eyes and see not," "hands and feel not," "feet and walk not;" he besought him to receive "the sign of the holy cross, by which the human race was redeemed;" and having explained the Creation, besought him "to receive the words of the preachers and the gospel of God, which they announce to you," and thus to know Him "who created you, who breathed into you the breath of life, who sent His only-begotten Son for your redemption, to snatch you from original sin, and to reward you, when thus snatched from the power of diabolical wickedness, with heavenly gifts."

In a letter addressed at the same time to the queen, the Pope expressed his grief that the king had delayed to show obedience to the voice of the preachers, and urged the queen, on her part, not to cease pouring forth prayers, and watching every opportunity, that his eyes might be opened to see the beauty and glory of the Christian faith.*

Edwin's suspense still, however, continued. The manner in which it was terminated, is mentioned by

* St. B. l. ii. c. 10 and 11.

Venerable Bede, with only two of those cautious expressions, by which he always puts us on our guard when he cannot vouch for his statements.*

Edwin, in his infancy, had been driven from his father's kingdom by Ædilfrid, the victor on the field of Degsastan. During his youth and early manhood he was still pursued by the ruthless policy of his enemy. He, at last, found shelter at the court of Redwald, the king of the East Angles.† Ædilfrid's messengers speedily followed, and offered ample treasure for the fugitive's life. Twice their offers were rejected; the third time they offered but one alternative, compliance or war. Redwald trembled at the threat of one whose whole life was a succession of conquests: he promised compliance.

That night, when Edwin was preparing to retire to rest, a well-trying friend called him out of the palace, and telling him the king's promise, bade him fly with him from the kingdom. Edwin thanked him; but wearied out with roving and entreating, determined to remain. His friend, accordingly, went into the palace; he himself remained outside, and had sat down on a stone in depressing thought, when he saw through the gloom a man approaching, whose dress and countenance betokened a stranger. The man asked him why he was thus keeping watch when others slept? Edwin was alarmed by his sudden appearance, and asked what it was to him whether he passed the night without or within? "Do not think," replied the stranger, "that I am ignorant of the cause of your sadness and want of sleep. What will you give," he continued, "if Redwald be dissuaded

* It was not difficult for Venerable Bede to obtain accurate information; James, St. Paulinus's deacon, who assisted him when converting Northumbria, was still living in the time of the Father of English Church History: "qui ad nostra tempora usque perman-sit" (ii. c. 16, sect. 136). In addition to the testimony of eye-witnesses, he had, it is evident, information at second hand of the most credible character.

† E. Anglia included Norfolk, Suffolk, &c.

from betraying you? and what, if you become more powerful than all the English kings before you?" Edwin readily promised a worthy return. "If," continued the other, "if he who has predicted such good fortune were to give you advice more useful for safety and life than was ever heard by any of your ancestors, would you follow it?" Edwin again promised. The stranger then laid his right hand upon the prince's head. "When, therefore," he said, "this sign is given to you, remember this night and our discourse, and delay not to fulfil what you have just promised." With these words, it is said he immediately disappeared. The prediction was almost as speedily verified: Redwald not only refused to betray the fugitive, but fell with all his forces upon Ædilfrid before the latter had time to collect his men. Ædilfrid fell in the unequal contest; and Edwin was placed upon his throne (A.D. 616).

How St. Paulinus learned what had thus occurred St. Bede does not venture to say; he only tells us that "it seems probable that he learned it in the spirit." However it was, St. Paulinus one day went to the king, while, as usual, in deep thought, and laying his right hand upon his head, asked him whether he knew that sign. The king must have kept the circumstance buried within his own bosom; he trembled, and would have thrown himself at the bishop's feet, had not the latter seized him, and raised him up. "You have been delivered from your enemies," said the saint; "you have obtained the kingdom; keep now your third promise: receive the faith, and obey the commandments of Him who has raised you from temporal evils to a kingdom, that so He may deliver you from everlasting misery, and make you share with Himself His eternal kingdom in heaven." Edwin declared himself ready to fulfil the promise; but requested time to lay the matter before his council, in order that, if they too were willing to receive the faith, all might be baptized together. To this St. Paulinus assented.*

* St. Bede, ii. c. 11 and 12.

The Council, therefore, assembled, and Edwin asked of each of its members what his opinion was of this new doctrine and worship. Coifi, the chief of his priests,* immediately replied: "You see, O king, what kind of a thing that is which is now announced to us; but I most truly declare to you what I have perceived to be certain, that the religion which we have hitherto held has no efficacy at all—no utility. For not one of your subjects has given himself more earnestly than I to the worship of our gods, and yet there are many who receive from you greater benefits, higher dignities, than I, and are more prosperous in all their schemes both for action and gain. But if the gods had any power, they would have rather helped me, who have been more zealously careful to serve them. It remains then, that, after due examination, if you see that the new things which are announced to us be better and mightier, we hasten to embrace them without any delay."

Another chief, after expressing his assent to Coifi's words and advice, continued in this remarkable strain: "The present life of man upon earth, when compared with that time which is not clear to us, seems to me, O king, just as that time does when, in winter (you and your chiefs and ministers sitting at a banquet, the fire indeed burning in the midst and the room well warmed, but whirlwinds of wintry rains or snows raging everywhere without), a solitary sparrow coming in, has flown very swiftly through the house; coming in at one door, it immediately flew out by the other. During that time in which it was within, it is not touched by the storm of winter; but yet, having in a moment passed through the very small space where there was serenity, at once from the storm going back to the storm, it darts away from your sight. So this life of man is seen for a time; but of what follows,

* "Primus pontificum ipsius."—Ib. ii. c. 13, sect. 129.

"A præfato pontifice sacrorum suorum quæreret [rex]," &c.—Ib. sect. 131.

Coifi then was a chief priest of Edwin's, that is, of Angle, idolatry.

or what goes before, we know nothing whatever. If, then, this new teaching has brought us anything more certain, my opinion is, that it ought indeed to be followed." The replies of the rest to the king's question were, more or less, to the same effect.

At the request of Coifi, St. Paulinus was now introduced, and preached to the illustrious assembly. When he had finished, Coifi exclaimed: "Long ago I had learned that what we worshipped was nothing; because the more earnestly I sought truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I openly acknowledge that in this preaching that truth stands revealed which can bestow upon us the gifts of life, safety, and eternal happiness. I propose, therefore, O king, we at once give to anathema and fire the temples and altars which we have consecrated with no useful result."

The king answered with an open renunciation of his idols, and a declaration of his faith in Christ. He then asked Coifi who ought to be the first to profane the inclosures, temples, and altars of the idols. "I," was the prompt answer; "who but myself, through the wisdom given me by God, ought now, as an example for all, to destroy what I have foolishly worshipped?"

At once, in contempt of idolatry, he besought the king to give him arms and a steed, though both were unlawful for the chief priest of the idols. Edwin complied; and, girt with a sword and grasping a lance, Coifi rode through the assembled crowd to an adjoining temple, and hurling in his lance, profaned it. The people had thought him mad; but his attendants, convinced and inflamed by his exulting words on the worship of the true God, readily obeyed his command, and reduced the temple and all its inclosures to ashes. The site of the temple was well known in St. Bede's time. It was at Godmundham, to the east of York, on the left bank of the Derwent.*

* St. Bede, l. ii. c. 13.

During the time of being under instruction previous to receiving baptism, Edwin hastily erected at York a church of wood, in honour of "St. Peter the Apostle." There, on Easter Sunday, he was baptized, together with all his nobles and a vast multitude of the people. Immediately after his baptism, he laid the foundation of a large, majestic basilica of stone, so built as to inclose, as a chapel within its walls, the former church of wood.

Inflamed with holy zeal, Edwin was not content with doing all in his power for the conversion of his subjects, but endeavoured to persuade his friends of East Anglia to renounce idolatry. Redwald had long before embraced Christianity, during a visit to the king of Kent; but, after he returned home, he was so far overcome by his queen and others, as to worship both Christ and the idols at one altar and by the same sacrifice. He died, it would seem, before Edwin's conversion. It was, therefore, in behalf of his son, Earpwald, that the zeal of the Northumbrian Bretwalda was now exerting itself, and not in vain: Earpwald soon yielded up his reason to the obedience of faith. There was now some ground to hope for the conversion of his subjects. That conversion, however, was not to come even from the zealous Edwin, Earpwald being murdered by a pagan chieftain.

After three years, Sigbert, Earpwald's brother, returning from exile in Gaul, where he had been baptized, mounted the throne, and strove, both by word and example, to deliver his subjects from infidelity. It was probably at his invitation that St. Felix of Burgundy applied to Honorius of Canterbury, and was empowered to preach to the East Anglians. His labours produced fruit; and he was soon enabled to fix his see at Domnoc or Dunwich, once a town on the coast of Suffolk, but long since engulfed in the German Ocean. This holy man called in literature to his aid. He erected schools in various places, in order to tame the ferocity of the people by the study of Latin. He had the happiness, during an episco-

pate of seventeen years, to convert the whole kingdom of East Anglia.*

The labours of St. Paulinus, after the baptism of Edwin, although equally great, and, at first, equally promising, were rendered in great measure fruitless. For six years, indeed, all went on successfully. So great, "it is said," was the desire for baptism, that, on one occasion when St. Paulinus accompanied the king and queen to a royal villa at Adgebrin, or Yeverin, in Glendale (Northumberland), such multitudes flocked to him that he found it necessary to remain there for six-and-thirty days, catechizing and conferring baptism on the banks of the Glen from morning till night during the whole time. Frequently in the same manner he was accustomed to baptize in the river Swale, near Catterick. For, adds Venerable Bede, "chapels or baptisteries could not as yet be built, in the very commencement of the infant Church." †

The apostolic travels of St. Paulinus extended to the banks of the Trent, where he baptized great numbers, and even as far south as Lincoln. There he baptized Blæcca, the governor of the city, and all his family. There, too, he built a noble church of stone, "of which," says St. Bede, "although the roof has been destroyed by neglect or the hand of an enemy, the walls are seen standing to this day; and every year it is usual for some miraculous cures to be publicly displayed in the same place, for the benefit of those who faithfully seek them.‡

While Northumbria and East Anglia were thus receiving the faith, St. Justus and Pope Boniface had both gone to their reward. Pope Honorius, the successor of Boniface, had sent letters therefore to St. Paulinus, empowering him to consecrate Honorius as archbishop of Canterbury, and granting the petition of himself and of those kings of the English who were Christians, that the survivor of the two should

* St. Bede, ii. c. 15. Will. of Mal. De Gest. Pon. l. ii. p. 237.

† St. Bede, ii. 14.

‡ Ib. c. 16, sect. 136.

consecrate the other's successor, without having in the first place to travel to Rome. Honorius was, accordingly, consecrated in the new church at Lincoln.*

Edwin had now been reigning over the English and Britons seventeen years. The last few of these years had been a period of profound peace. The numerous fountains which he had constructed along the public roads remained uninjured, and their brazen drinking vessels untouched. According to a proverb which passed current even in the time of St. Bede—"If a solitary woman with her new-born babe in her arms chose to walk through the whole island from sea to sea, she could do so without injury." Undoubtedly God had prepared this interval of peace, so unusual in those days, in order to facilitate the preaching of the faith. He now permitted a fearful interruption.

Cædwalla, one of the kings of the Britons, revolted against the authority of Edwin, and found a powerful ally in Penda, the king of Mercia. The Bretwalda speedily confronted them on Hatfield Chace. The battle was long and desperate: Edwin's son, the valiant Osfrid, was stricken down with a mortal blow; and, at last, the mighty Bretwalda himself was slain, and his whole army slaughtered or dispersed. The king's head was carried to York, and there was buried in the portico of St. Gregory, in his own unfinished church of St. Peter.

The victors gave the whole country to fire and sword. Although Cædwalla was a Christian, he outvied in cruelty his pagan ally. He trusted that it was reserved for him to avenge the losses of his ancestors, and openly boasted that he would annihilate the whole race of the English. Neither age nor sex were spared; and torments were added, as if fire and sword were too merciful.

The queen thought it high time to seek a place of safety. Accompanied by St. Paulinus and by Basso, one of Edwin's bravest warriors, she hurried on ship-

* St. Bede, ii. 16 and 18, sects. 136 and 140.

board, and sailed for Kent. Among the treasures which they took with them are mentioned a large cross of gold, "a golden chalice, consecrated for the ministry of the altar," and other precious vases. When they arrived at their destination, the see of Rochester was vacant, its bishop, Romanus, having been drowned on his way to Rome. St. Paulinus, therefore, undertook its administration, and there died (A.D. 644). He was described by an old man who had been baptized by him, as tall of stature, slightly stooping, with black hair, an attenuated face, and a very thin but hooked nose; at once venerable and terrible of aspect.*

Northumbria, meantime, was full of misery. Osric, a cousin of Edwin, had occupied the throne of Deira, the southern half of Northumbria; while Eanfrid, a son of the famous Ædilfrid, seized Bernicia, the other half. Both had been baptized; both relapsed.

Cædwalla was now in the city of York. Osric flew thither to besiege him. The Briton watched his opportunity, and seeing him off his guard, sallied out with all his forces, and both slew him, and trampled his army under foot. It seemed as if his boast were already on the point of fulfilment: twice victorious, he ruled as if his only object was to exterminate. For a whole year no force dared to array itself against him. Eanfrid, forgetting his father's prowess at Degsastan and Chester, went to the tyrant's camp with twelve of his thanes, to sue for peace. Death was the reward of his cowardice.

The fate, and still more, the apostacy, of these unhappy princes, made the indignant Northumbrians blot them out from their annals, and assign this year to the reign of Oswald, their next king. This chieftain was another of Ædilfrid's sons, but his mother was Edwin's sister. He was a faithful Christian. He collected a small force, and determined to give battle on the heights between Hexham and the old Roman wall. Finding himself now close to the enemy, he

* St. Bede, ii. c. 16 and 20; and iii. c. 14.

caused a cross to be made and set up, and there kneeling down, he besought the help of our Lord. Then, as the morning began to dawn, he fell upon the ruthless enemy, and, despite of their experience and overwhelming numbers, he slew Cædwalla and the greater part of his army.

The field of battle was, for generations after, known as Heaven-Field. There, says St. Bede, "on the spot where he prayed, innumerable miraculous cures are known to have been effected, for proof as well as memorial of the king's faith. For, even to this day, many persons are in the habit of cutting chips from the very wood of the most holy cross (erected by St. Oswald). These are put into water, which is either given as a potion to, or is sprinkled upon, sick men and cattle, and they are immediately cured." There, too, every year, the day before the anniversary of Oswald's death, the monks of the church of Hexham assembled to keep vigils for the salvation of his soul; and in the morning, after long chanting of psalms, "to offer for him the victim of the sacred oblation." *

* St. Bede, iii. c. 1 and 2.

CHAPTER VIII.

JAMES THE DEACON—THE MONKS OF IONA—ST. COLUMBA—ST. NINIAN—ST. AIDAN, BISHOP OF LINDISFARNE—ST. BIRINUS, THE APOSTLE OF WESSEX—ZEAL AND DEATH OF OSWALD—KING OSWINI'S HUMILITY—HE IS MURDERED BY OSWIO—DEATH OF ST. AIDAN—CONVERSION OF MERCIA—BATTLE OF WINWÆD—ST. CEDD CONSECRATED BY FINAN OF LINDISFARNE—HIS MONASTERY AT LASTINGHAM—HIS MANNERS AND DEATH—SECOND APOSTACY OF ESSEX—ITS FINAL CONVERSION.

HAVING delivered the country from its ravagers, Oswald began to look round for the means of renewing the work of conversion. The fruit of St. Paulinus's labours was by no means entirely lost. The zeal of his deacon, James, who remained amidst all the confusion of war (dwelling generally on the Swale, near Catterick), had kept together many of the terrified neophytes, and even drew no small number of fresh converts to the waters of baptism. This holy man survived many years; and, being famed for his vocal powers, became, in the words of St. Bede, "the teacher of ecclesiastical singing, as practised at Rome and Canterbury." *

If some precious fruit had thus been preserved, much had been lost. The greater part of the nation was still seated in the shades of death. Oswald, therefore, determined to apply for aid to the Irish monks of Hii or Iona, by whom he had himself been instructed and baptized.

The monks of Iona had been located there by St. Columba. This holy man was abbot of the monastery of Dearmach, or the Plain of Oaks, in Ireland. Passing the straits between his own country and Scotland, he penetrated the most rugged fastnesses of the

* St. Bede, ii. c. 20.

Highlands. The inhabitants were the fierce Northern Picts, a race of pagans. Their kinsmen, who partly dwelt amongst the same mountains, but more to the south, and were therefore called Southern Picts, were Christians. They had been converted by St. Ninian, a Briton, who had studied at Rome, and was sent by the Holy See to preach to them the good tidings. Confining his zeal, therefore, to the Northern Picts, St. Columba, "by word and example," says St. Bede, converted the entire nation. Brisio, the king, gave him the little isle of Hii; on which he built a monastery.*

From the two monasteries of Dearmach and Iona colonies of monks again and again issued forth, until the countries of the Picts and Northern Irish were thickly planted with their monasteries. All these religious houses were subject to the abbot of Iona. Even the bishops and "the whole province" were under his jurisdiction,—an arrangement very unusual. He was a monk, says Venerable Bede, not only in habit, but in manner of life. His successors, too, were "remarkable for great chastity, divine love, and strict observance of rule." Living, however, at the extremities of the world, they were ignorant of the decrees of councils regarding the time for celebrating Easter, and therefore made use of fallacious calculations; but they were diligent in the study of the writings of the Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles, and in works of piety and chastity. Such is the testimony of Venerable Bede.†

St. Columba had gone to his reward about thirty years when Oswald's messengers, asking help for his benighted people, arrived at Iona. His request was granted; but "it is said" that the first person sent

* Adom. Life of St. Colum. ii. 34, 36, 43, &c.; Ann. Ben. viii. 8; and Boll. June 9; St. Bede, l. i. c. 1. Some, Usher among the rest, have questioned St. Bede's accuracy in this statement. From the site of the island they would infer that it was given, not by the Picts, but by the Irish settled in Scotland. This is scarcely a sufficient reason for attacking a direct statement.

† Lib. iii. c. 3 and 4, sect. 157, &c., and 160, &c.

for this purpose was scarcely listened to; and returning to Iona, told the superiors of the monastery that it was of no use to preach to a people of so savage and barbarous a disposition. Touched with grief at this account, and still longing for the salvation of the English, the community was considering what should be done, when St. Aidan, one of their number, said to the unsuccessful preacher,—“Brother, it appears to me that you were more rigid than was fitting towards your untaught hearers, and that you did not, at first, give them the milk of milder doctrine, until gradually, nourished with the Word of God, they might be able to take what is more perfect, and to keep the more sublime precepts of God.” These words attracted the attention of the assembly to the speaker, who was, therefore, himself selected as the new bishop of the English. St. Bede does not vouch for the full accuracy of this account; but it is certain that St. Aidan was the new bishop. He fixed his see in the monastery of Lindisfarne, now called Holy Isle, almost touching the coast of Northumberland, and indeed being separated from it only at the flow of the tide. Lindisfarne is about eight miles in circuit. It is so called from Lindis, a little brook, which twice a day is lost in the rising sea, *lindis* meaning the lesser tide. Farne is an island smaller than Lindisfarne, and at the distance of several miles from the shore.*

St. Aidan, with the concurrence of the monks of Lindisfarne, appointed the abbot of the monastery, but ceased not, whenever he returned from his missionary labours, to consider himself still a monk, holding no personal property, and uniting in all the usual monastic observances. Thus, remarks St. Bede, did he, and, after him, all his successors, comply with St. Gregory's directions to St. Augustine, never living “apart from his clergy.” †

From this citadel of Christian discipline and peace

* Sim. Dun. De Gest. Reg. an. 793.

† Sti. B. Vita Sti. Cuth. c. xvi.

the new bishop issued forth on many an apostolic journey. There being at first but few churches, it was his custom to lodge from time to time in one of the royal villas, in each of which he had a church and a private apartment. From the villa in which he thus lodged he used to walk out into all parts of the neighbouring country, to preach to the inhabitants. As St. Aidan was not very fluent in English, he seems to have made use of interpreters. At all events, King Oswald, with the zeal of a true servant of the King of kings, became the bishop's interpreter to his own courtiers and chieftains.* If St. Aidan happened to dine with the king (which, indeed, he rarely did), he went with one or two of his clergy; and having partaken slightly of what there was, he hurried away as soon as he could find an opportunity, to pray or to read the Scriptures with his companions.

Neither fear nor false respect checked his sharp words whenever he saw the rich in fault, reproving the proud and mighty, remarks St. Bede, with an authority worthy of a bishop. He never conformed to the national custom of bestowing gifts upon the powerful. Whenever they paid him a visit, they were always welcome to his frugal board, but they found no extra dish. If the king or his nobles made him any present, he always either gave it to the poor, or employed it in redeeming those who had been unjustly condemned to slavery. Unless compelled by some great necessity, he always travelled on foot. Those that accompanied him, whether laity or clergy, were engaged in reading the Scriptures or in learning the psalms: such was his daily custom. Wherever he saw inhabitants, he turned aside to invite them to Christianity, or to strengthen them in faith and good works, if already Christians. He used from time to time to withdraw from the world to the silence and prayer of the monastery of Lindisfarne.†

The people flocked in crowds to hear this man of

* St. Bede, iii. 5 and 17.

† Ib. iii. 5, 16, and 17.

God, and to receive baptism. Their younger children received the elements of education from Irish masters, who were chiefly monks, and who, by degrees, trained them to studies that were more advanced, and to the observance of monastic discipline.*

Whilst Northumbria was thus receiving the faith, Wessex was beginning to listen to the preaching of St. Birinus. This servant of God was a priest, who, with the permission of Pope Honorius, had undertaken to carry the light of the Gospel into the interior of England. He was, therefore, at the Pope's command, consecrated at Genoa, by Aster, the bishop of Milan. Arriving in Wessex, probably in what is now called Hampshire, and finding everything about him thoroughly pagan, St. Birinus thought that he would best comply with the intentions of his Holiness by at once opening his mission (A.D. 635).

His efforts were soon rewarded. Cynigils, the king of that country, asked for baptism. Oswald, the Bretwalda, happening to come to Wessex to seek the hand of the king's daughter, stood sponsor to the royal convert at the baptismal font. The two kings, Cynigils as the direct ruler, and Oswald as Bretwalda or chief lord, then bestowed upon the bishop the city of Dorchester. There he founded his see. After "building and consecrating churches, and converting multitudes of people, he passed to the Lord, and was buried in the same city." "Many years afterwards, his body was translated to the city of Winchester, and there placed in the church of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul."

The reign of Oswald, the friend of the poor and of the Church, was now drawing to a premature close.† His power exceeded even that of Edwin: English and Britons, Picts and the Irish in Britain, all acknowledged his sway. In one moment all this glory vanished. Penda disdained further submission; and,

* St. Bede, iii. c. 3.

† Ib. iii. c. 6 and 7.

mustering his pagan hordes, fell upon the Bretwalda's army on the field of Maser. The fight was long and obstinate; but Oswald was, at last, surrounded and slain, and his forces were completely routed. With his last breath "he prayed for the souls of his army," so that it became a proverbial saying amongst the Northumbrians: "'Lord have mercy on their souls,' said Oswald, when falling to the earth." In the place where he fell, adds Venerable Bede, "cures of the sick, both men and cattle, are of public notoriety, even to the present day."* He also says, that when his bones were, some years after, carried to the monastery of Beardenew, a column of light stood the whole night over the wain, reaching high into the heavens, and seen by nearly the whole province of Lindissey. An abbess, who declared that she was one of those that saw it, was still living when St. Bede wrote the account. His sanctity and miracles were no less spoken of in Germany and Ireland.†

After the battle of Maserfield, Bernicia fell to Oswio, the brother of Oswald; and Deira to Oswini. The latter was tall, of comely aspect, affable, and generous. He was so much beloved, that the noblest men of the different kingdoms used to throng to his court. Yet, of all his good qualities, his humility is said to have been most conspicuous. On one occasion he gave his best horse, covered with the royal housings, to St. Aidan of Lindisfarne, that it might bear him across rivers and other difficult places. The bishop, according to his usual custom, gave the rich gift to a poor man that begged relief. Soon afterwards he went to dine with the king. The latter had returned from hunting just in time for the meal, but seeing St. Aidan, asked the bishop why he had given away his steed, and whether there were not less valuable horses and other things that would do for the poor, rather than one of the royal horses, which he par-

* St. Bede, iii. c. 9.

† Ib. c. 11.

ticularly wished him to keep. "What do you say, O king?" was St. Aidan's quick reply; "is that son of a mare more dear to you than the Son of God?"

The court was now entering the banqueting-room, and the bishop went with the rest, and took his place. The king for a few moments remained standing at a fire warming himself, with his ministers around him, when, suddenly recollecting St. Aidan's expression, he ungirt his sword and gave it to an attendant, and then throwing himself at the bishop's feet, he begged him not to be angry with him, "for never again will I say anything of the sort, nor will I pass any judgment upon what or how much of my treasure you may give to the sons of God."

Seeing him thus prostrate, the bishop was struck with great fear; but, starting immediately to his feet, raised the king, and promised not to be at all angry if he would sit down to table, and cast away all sadness. The king did so, therefore, cheerfully; but the bishop himself with tears. One of St. Aidan's priests was there, and asked him in Irish why he wept: "I know," was the answer, "that the king will not live long; for never, until now, have I seen a king humble. I therefore perceive that he will be speedily taken from this life, for the nation is not worthy to have such a ruler." *

Too soon was this prediction verified. A dissension arose between Oswini and Oswio. They collected their forces; but Oswini perceiving that those of his enemy were far more numerous, disbanded his army, and concealed himself in the house of the thane Hunwald. He was betrayed by the base thane; and with equal baseness was put to death by Oswio. Repenting afterwards of his crime, the latter built on the spot where Oswini's blood was shed, a monastery, "for the sake of punishing this crime," and in order that prayers might there be daily offered for the souls both of the murderer and his victim.†

* St. Bede, l. iii. c. 14.

† Ib. sect. 188.

St. Aidan, the Apostle of the North, did not long survive Oswini. He had gone to one of the king's villas, not far from the royal city of Bambrough, to make it the central point of a missionary campaign, when he was seized with his last illness. A sort of tent was raised against the outside of the western wall of the church. There, with no other pillow than the slope of some wooden prop, he breathed forth his soul in the same dearly-prized poverty in which he had lived. His body was taken to Lindisfarne, and there buried in the cemetery of the monks. The monastery of Iona appointed Finan as bishop in place of St. Aidan.* This bishop had the happiness of seeing the faith extend amongst the Mercians, in the central parts of England.

Penda, being delighted with the abilities of his son Peada, had given the young prince the province of the Middle Angles. Peada soon afterwards went to Northumbria, to ask for the hand of Alchfleda, the daughter of Oswio. He was told that unless he became a Christian his request could not be granted. He was not unwilling to listen to the Christian teaching; and soon the hope of a glorious resurrection and an immortal kingdom in heaven so wrought upon his heart, that he declared himself ready to become a Christian, even without the alliance which he had sought. The persuasions of his friend and brother-in-law, Alchfrid, the son of Oswio, completed the good work: he and all his train of friends and soldiers were baptized by Finan of Lindisfarne (A.D. 653).

On his return he was accompanied by four priests, whose learning and piety had marked them out as fitted for the conversion of Peada's subjects. These holy men were Adda, Betti, and Cedd, three Englishmen, and Diuma, an Irishman. Their preaching was eagerly listened to; and great numbers, both of the rich and poor, were admitted to baptism. The zeal of the missionaries extended to those that remained

* St. Bede, lib. iii. c. 14—17.

under the direct rule of Penda. The old warrior put no impediment in their way. Whenever, on the contrary, he found any Christians whose lives contradicted their belief, he treated them with scorn, declaring that they who refused to obey the God in whom they believed were mean and contemptible.

Penda himself continued a pagan. He was slain soon after, during one of his usual exterminating inroads into Northumbria.* Oswio had made him the most submissive offers, in order to buy a lasting peace; but, seeing that his messengers were scornfully repulsed, that utter extermination was Penda's object, the afflicted king turned "to the help of the divine mercy:" he collected his little army, and he vowed, like Jephtha, that if he obtained the victory, he would consecrate his little daughter's virginity to God, and would give twelve farms for building monasteries. On the banks of the Vinwæd or Are he faced the numerous host of his ruthless enemy. He saw in the hostile ranks thirty "royal leaders,"† and amongst them even the brother and successor of Anna, the good East Anglian king, who had been one of Penda's victims. He saw hanging aloof Edilwald, the son of St. Oswald, who had even served as the invader's guide into Northumbria. He saw, in short, in the army thus arrayed against him, a living proof of the triumphs and resources of Penda. He saw around his own banners, men few in number, and accustomed to defeat. Yet, nothing daunted, he rushed upon the terrible array before him, and at nightfall scarcely one of Penda's thirty leaders survived. Penda himself was amongst the slain. Oswio fulfilled his vow, and for three years held Mercia and the greater part of the island in subjection. During all the tumult of war, the four missionaries continued their arduous labours in Mercia. It was soon evident that such progress had been made that a bishop was now indispensable. Diuna, one of the four, was, therefore,

* St. Bede, iii. 21 and 24.

† "Duces regii triginta."—iii. 24.

consecrated by Finan as bishop of both the Middle Angles and Mercians.*

Another of the little band had even before this been raised to the dignity of bishop. Sigbert the Good had succeeded Sigbert the Little in the kingdom of the East Saxons or Essex. During frequent visits to Northumbria, he had learned from his friend and lord paramount, Oswio, that wood and stone fashioned by men's hands, and liable to be broken or trampled under foot, could not become gods. Then he gradually came to understand that God must be incomprehensible, omnipotent, eternal. Such discourse often repeated, produced a deep impression. Oswio had a favourite residence close to the Roman wall, and about ten miles from the German Ocean. Here it was that Peada had been baptized; and here it was that Sigbert the Good was residing when he received the grace of conversion. Repeated visits, repeated conversations, had, at last, subdued his prejudices. He consulted those who had accompanied him from Essex; and all, at last, embraced the faith. They were baptized by Finan.

Sigbert's next object was the conversion of his people. He, of course, knew nothing then of the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Canterbury; nor, in all probability, did Oswio, or even the bishop of Lindisfarne, at least distinctly. Cedd was, therefore, called from his labours in Mercia, and sent with another priest to Essex. He was very successful. Soon after, when he had returned to the north to consult with Finan, the latter called two other prelates, and consecrated the laborious missionary as bishop of the East Saxons. The new bishop, on his return, "completing with greater authority the work which he had begun," erected churches in various places, and ordained priests and deacons, especially at Tilbury, on the Thames, and at another place, supposed to be Maldon, in Essex, where he founded two monasteries,

* St. Bede, l. iii. c. 21 and 24.

in which he taught, far as could be in men as yet uninformed, the observance of the discipline of monastic life.

While St. Cedd was thus engaged, he discovered that one of the East Saxon counts, a thane of royal blood, had contracted marriage within the forbidden degrees. He warned and entreated to no purpose, and therefore, at last, "excommunicated" him, and commanded the Christians neither to sit at his table, nor to enter his house. Sigbert, contrary to the general tenor of his life, accepted and acted upon an invitation to dine with the count. He was returning home from the dinner when he met St. Cedd. Struck with fear for what he had just done, the king threw himself from his horse, and begged pardon for his sin. The bishop, too, dismounted, and touching the prostrate king with his staff, he exclaimed, "I announce to you that, because you would not keep from the house of that lost and accursed man, you will meet your death in that very house."

So, indeed, it happened. The king was there murdered by the count and his brother. When the two nobles were interrogated with regard to their motives, their only excuse was, that they had no patience with one who was so full of forgiveness for his enemies, and who was so easily induced to pardon those that had loaded him with insult. Such virtues were, indeed, the reverse of the fierce and blood-thirsty passions of the pagan English.*

The murder of Sigbert the Good did not interrupt the work of conversion, his successor, Suidhelm, being a Christian, having been baptized by St. Cedd. While thus labouring among the East Saxons, St. Cedd did not forget the wants of his native country, Northumbria, but often snatched a little time to go and preach in those parts. Once, when he was thus occupied in the north, Oidilwald or Edilwald, the son of St. Oswald, who was reigning in Deira, requested him to

* St. Bede, l. iii. c. 22.

accept a grant of land for building a monastery. The king wished to go, occasionally, to such a place, to pray and hear the word of God; and there he wished his body to await the resurrection. St. Cedd accepted the offer; and at Lastingham, not many miles from Whitby, chose a wild moorland spot for the site. In conformity with the monastic rule in which he had been professed, and in order to draw down God's blessing upon the place, he did not immediately build the monastery, but first dwelt there in prayer and solitude during the whole of Lent. Every day, except Sundays, he fasted from every kind of food till evening, and then took only an egg, a small piece of bread, and a little milk and water. When the monastery was built, and inhabited by religious, who followed the same rule as at Lindisfarne, St. Cedd did not cease to watch over it as its immediate superior. There he was seized with his last illness; and there he was buried. A stone church was erected in the course of a few years, to which the saint's body was translated. Every vestige of the monastery has long since disappeared; but the old, simple church, with apsis and crypt, and massive walls, apparently the very building mentioned by Venerable Bede, is still standing on the edge of the Moorlands,—itself a picture of desolation, a desecrated fragment, with every object for which it was intended swept from around it.* After the death of St. Cedd and of King Suidhelm, a portion of the East Saxons, together with one of their two kings, again apostatized. It was the time of the Great Pestilence. Those that were not looking in earnest for the eternal life, became alarmed at the ravages around them, and, in their miserable despair, began to restore the temples and adore their discarded idols. Sebbi, their other king, remained faithful, together with all his subjects. Perhaps it was to his prayers and fidelity that the nation owed the grace of its final conversion. At all events, by the agency of

* St. Bede, lib. iii. c. 23.

Wulpheri, king of Mercia, Jaruman, the bishop of that country, proceeded to Essex, and soon the temples and altars of the idols lay everywhere in ashes, and the repentant people again filled the churches, "preferring death, with the faith of the resurrection, to an idolatrous life in the filthiness of infidelity."*

* St. Bede, lib. iii. c. 30.

CHAPTER IX.

VARIATION IN THE NORTHUMBRIAN OBSERVANCE OF EASTER—LETTERS OF ST. LAWRENCE OF CANTERBURY AND OF POPES HONORIUS AND JOHN UPON THIS SUBJECT—AGILBERT COMPLETES THE CONVERSION OF WESSEX—VINI'S USURPATION AND SIMONY—AGILBERT'S VISIT TO NORTHUMBRIA—ST. WILFRID AND ST. BENNET BISCOP IN THEIR YOUTH—DISCUSSION OF THE EASTER QUESTION—DEPARTURE OF COLMAN—ST. BEDE'S EULOGIUM OF THE IRISH CLERGY—UNIFORMITY IN THE OBSERVANCE OF EASTER GRADUALLY INTRODUCED—CEOLFRID'S LETTER TO KING NAITAN—ST. ALDHELM, THE SACRED MINSTREL.

PENDA, the slayer of kings, having fallen in the battle of Vinwædfield (A.D. 655), the country was now enjoying a repose unknown for years. The time was evidently favourable for settling various points of discipline. Of these points, the want of uniformity in the observance of Easter was most striking, because practically most inconvenient. As soon as the monks of Hii had begun to preach in the north, the difference was observable. James, the deacon of St. Paulinus, and various missionaries from Gaul and Kent, kept Easter as at Rome and Canterbury, while the monks of Hii and the Northern Irish kept it like the Britons or Welsh.

All, indeed, kept Easter on a Sunday, thus avoiding the error of the Quartodecimans.* Yet, while Queen Eanfleda, directed by Romanus, a priest from Kent, "was keeping Palm Sunday, persevering still in fasting," King Oswio "was keeping Easter Sunday, his fastings being at an end." As long as St. Aidan lived, this difference was patiently endured. "It was perceived," remarks Venerable Bede, "that although he could not keep Easter in a manner contrary to the

* "Non, ut quidam falso opinantur, quarta decima luna in qualibet feria cum Judæis, sed die dominica," &c.—St. Bede, c. 17, sect. 198; see also sect. 161.

custom of those that had sent him, yet he was careful to perform with diligence the works of faith, of piety, and of charity, in the way usual to the saints." He was, therefore, loved and venerated by Honorius of Canterbury, and St. Felix of East Anglia, although his time of keeping Easter differed from theirs.*

Whilst, however, the Archbishop of Canterbury thus tolerated the practice, it must not be supposed that he or his predecessors had never raised a warning voice against it. As early as A.D. 605, St. Lawrence, the second in the see of Canterbury, wrote a synodal letter to both the Irish and the Britons, to urge them to keep Easter as it was kept by all the rest of the Church. He told the former that he had thought them more holy and exact than the latter; but that he was undeceived by Dagan, one of their bishops, who, during his stay at Canterbury, refused to eat under the same roof with him. How these letters were received we are not told: that they produced little or no change is evident from the Easter controversy that was now arising in the north of England.†

What St. Lawrence of Canterbury had thus urged, Pope Honorius thirty years afterwards again pressed upon their attention, and John IV., whilst only Pope elect (A.D. 640), "urged with great authority and learning."‡

When Finan had taken St. Aidan's place as bishop of Lindisfarne, the arrival in the north of many persons from Kent and France showed still more clearly that the Irish calculation was different from that of the greater part of the Church. An Irishman, named Ronan, who had studied in Italy and France, came to Northumbria about this time, and entering into disputation with Finan, "corrected many," says St. Bede, "or stimulated them to a more diligent investigation of the truth."

When Finan had died, and Colman was now bishop of Lindisfarne, that truth became still more generally

* St. Bede, c. 24, 25, and 26. † Ib. l. ii. c. 4.

‡ Ib. l. ii. c. 19.

known; and men not only felt the inconvenience of this difference of practice, but began to be disquieted in their consciences.*

It happened, when the controversy was growing warm, that Agilbert, the bishop of the West Saxons, went on a visit to his two friends, Alchfrid, king of Northumbria, and the Abbot St. Wilfrid. This visit, as the sequel will show, brought the question to an immediate issue.†

Agilbert was a native of France. When as yet but a young cleric, about eighteen years before his arrival in Northumbria, he had made a prolonged stay in Ireland, in order to study the Holy Scriptures; and was passing through England, apparently on his return to France, when, taking compassion on the idolaters of Wessex, he began, of his own accord, to preach to them the good tidings of peace to men of good-will, and thus to complete the work which St. Birinus had so successfully begun.

It happened, at this very time, that Coinwalch, their king, who, three years before, had been driven from his throne by Penda, had become a Christian during his exile at the court of Good Anna, king of East Anglia, and had returned to his dominions when Agilbert was beginning to preach. The king was overjoyed at the zeal and energy of the missionary. He requested him to stay in Wessex, and become its bishop. Agilbert, accordingly, remained many years, labouring with much fruit. The king's mind, however, became, by some means, alienated from the good bishop, and to such an extent, that at last, being weary of his foreign accent, and being also, it seems, quite ignorant of church government, he invited to his court a bishop "of his own tongue," named Vini, who had been ordained in Gaul. On his arrival, the king took upon himself to divide into two what had hitherto been the diocese of Agilbert alone, and gave to Vini one portion of it, with an episcopal see in the city of Winchester. Indignant that this should have

* St. Bede, l. iii. c. 25, ad init.

† Ib. l. iii. c. 25.

been done without his sanction, Agilbert returned to Gaul. Not many years after, Vini himself was expelled by Coinwalch, and, contemning the holy example of so many of the bishops and other missionaries in the country, disgracefully purchased from Wulfheri, the king of the Mercians, the bishopric of London.

Coinwalch, after this, had no bishop in his country for some years. Misfortunes, however, fell heavily upon his kingdom, humbling his heart, and making him understand, says St. Bede, that, with the loss of bishops, his country had lost the protection of Heaven. He sent to Agilbert, offering satisfaction, and entreating him to return. This was no longer possible, he being now bishop of Paris; but, as the king's entreaty for help was very pressing, he sent his nephew, Leutherius, saying, that he was worthy of the episcopate. Leutherius was honourably received by both king and people, and was consecrated by Theodore of Canterbury.*

It was some years before this, however—indeed, it was probably at the very time of his final departure from Wessex—that Agilbert paid the visit to Northumbria that brought the Easter question to an immediate issue. On arriving in the north, he took up his abode with his friend King Alchfrid, and his equally dear friend St. Wilfrid. The latter, at the age of fourteen, had determined to embrace the monastic state. Having obtained his father's consent, he was placed under the care of the monks of Lindisfarne. As he grew towards manhood, he became distrustful with regard to some of their usages, and expressed a desire to go to Rome, to see what eccle-

* St. Bede, l. iii. c. 7. Parish or *parochia* is used by St. Bede for a bishop's diocese. Thus, when Coinwalch took upon himself to divide Wessex into two dioceses, Bede's words are:—"Dividens in duas *parochias* provinciam," &c. When Agilbert had become bishop of Paris, and was entreated by Coinwalch to resume the bishopric of Wessex, his answer was, that he could not; "*Quia episcopatu propriæ civitatis ac parochiæ teneretur adstrictus*," &c.—Lib. iii. c. 7, sect. 170 and 171. See also l. v. c. 18, ad fin., and many other places.

siastical or monastic rites were observed at the Apostolic See. He was encouraged in this desire by the monks. He at last went to Kent, persevering, however, in prayers, vigils, fasting, and study. There he became acquainted with St. Bennet (or Benedict) Biscop, who was one of King Oswio's thanes, and was about his own age, and, like himself, was preparing to go to Rome, "to see and adore," says St. Bede, the tombs of the apostles. They travelled, therefore, together as far as Lyons. At Rome, St. Wilfrid enjoyed the friendship of the learned and saintly Boniface, the archdeacon of the Holy See. After a long stay at Rome and Lyons, he returned to Northumbria, and, obtaining the friendship of Alchfrid, taught him the right observance of Easter. Alchfrid had recently founded the monastery of Ripon, and had given it to monks who followed the Scottish calculation of Easter. These had their choice now given them, either to abandon that custom, or to surrender the monastery. They gave up the monastery; and St. Wilfrid was appointed abbot of the new inmates, and there about three years after was ordained priest by Agilbert.*

The arrival of such a man as Bishop Agilbert, naturally, in the midst of other conversation, led to the question of Easter, as well as of the form of wearing the tonsure, and other ecclesiastical matters. A synod was the legitimate means of deciding such questions, but the church of the English was not as yet so completely organized as to admit of a regular synod. Yet such was the emergency of the case that it was resolved by all parties that a kind of synod should be called. The monastery of Whitby, of which St. Hilda was then abbess, was to be the place of meeting. It stood upon a height commanding a wide view of the small land-locked harbour, and of the town, valley, and river beyond, as well as of the numerous rocky headlands along that part of the coast. The ruins of a noble church still mark the spot.

* St. B. Vita Sti. Benedicti, sect. 2; St. B. l. v. 19, and l. iii. c. 25; Eddius, 3, &c., apud Gale.

There, on the appointed day, the members of the synod and their friends and dependents assembled.

Amongst the rest, there were, as advocates for the Scottish custom—Colman of Lindisfarne, with his clergy from Ireland; St. Cedd, the bishop of the East Angles, who had not yet gone to his reward; besides King Oswio the Bretwalda, with St. Hilda and others of the monastery of Whitby. The chief of their opponents were, Bishop Agilbert with the two priests, Agatho whom he had brought with him, and St. Wilfrid of Ripon; besides King Alchfrid, the son of Oswio, and the priest Romanus of Kent, and James the deacon of St. Paulinus. St. Cedd acted as the interpreter of both parties, and proved himself “most vigilant” in the discharge of that office.

When all had taken their places, Oswio made some introductory remarks upon the necessity of a common rule, and concluded by asking Colman to state his practice and to trace out its origin. He replied: “This Pasch which I have been accustomed to keep, I have received from my superiors who sent me hither as bishop, which all our fathers, men beloved by God, are known to have kept in the same manner. Nor let this seem to any one contemptible and worthy of reprobation: we have it written down that the blessed Evangelist John, the disciple particularly loved by our Lord, kept the very same, together with all the churches over which he presided.” When Colman had finished, Agilbert was called upon. He requested that, as he was not very familiar with the English tongue, St. Wilfrid might be allowed to speak in his name.

Permission being granted, St. Wilfrid thus spoke: “The Easter which we keep, we have seen kept by all that live at Rome, where the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul lived, preached, suffered, and are buried. This we have seen kept by all in Italy and in Gaul, through which we have travelled for the sake of praying and studying. This we know for certain: by Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and the whole

world, wherever the Church of Christ is diffused, we have found it kept at one and the same time, except by these men only and the accomplices of their obstinacy ; I mean the Picts and Britons,* the men of the two remotest islands of the ocean, and not the whole of those islands, together with whom these are contending with a senseless labour." "It is strange," replied Colman, "that you would term as senseless our labour, in which we follow the example of an Apostle so great as to be worthy to recline upon the Lord's breast, whilst all the world knows that his way of living was most wise." "Far be it from me," answered St. Wilfrid, "to impute folly to John, when he kept the decrees of the Mosaical law according to the letter, the Church as yet following the Jewish customs in many respects, and the Apostles being unable to throw aside all the practices of the Law which God had given. Just as it was necessary for all who came to the faith to repudiate images ('*simulacra*') which were invented by the devils, viz., in order not to give scandal to those Jews that lived among the Gentiles. For hence is it that St. Paul circumcised Timothy, that he offered sacrifices in the temple, that, with Aquila and Priscilla, he shaved his head at Corinth : viz., for no useful purpose but to avoid giving scandal to the Jews. Hence it was that James said to the same Paul, 'Thou seest brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews that have believed, and they are all zealots for the Law.' And yet at the present day, the Gospel having shed its light over the world, it is not necessary, nor even lawful, for the faithful to be circumcised, or to offer to God the sacrifices of fleshy victims.† Therefore John, according to the usage of the Law, on the fourteenth day of the first month in the evening, used to begin the celebration of the Paschal feast, no matter whether it fell on a Sabbath or any other day of the week. Peter, on the

* Then St. Wilfrid, as well as St. Bede, considered the Picts as a race distinct from the Britons.

† "*Vel hostias Deo victimarum offerre carnalium.*"

other hand, when he preached at Rome, mindful of the Lord having risen from the dead and given to the world the hope of resurrection on the first day of the week, understood that Easter was to be kept in such a manner that he, just as much as St. John, always waited until the evening of the fourteenth day of the moon of the first month had made its appearance, according to the usage and precepts of the Law. This having arrived, if the next day were Sunday, which was then called 'Prima Sabbati,' he began that same evening to keep Easter Sunday, just as we are now accustomed to do. If, however, the Sunday came, not on the day after the fourteenth of the moon, but on the sixteenth or seventeenth, or any other day of the moon up to the twenty-first, he waited for that day, and on the previous Saturday evening he used to begin the most holy solemnities of Easter. It thus happened that Easter Sunday was kept only from the fifteenth to the twenty-first day of the moon. Nor does this evangelical and apostolical tradition destroy, but it rather fulfils the Law, in which the Pasch is ordered to be kept from the fourteenth day of the moon of the first month, at evening, even to the twenty-first day of the moon of the same month, at evening. All the successors of blessed John in Asia, and all the Church throughout the world was *converted** to the imitation of this way of keeping it. And it was not newly decreed, but was confirmed by the Council of Nice, as Ecclesiastical History teaches, that this was the true Easter, this the only one that should have been kept by the faithful.

"It is therefore plain, Colman, that you follow the example neither of John, as you assert that you do,

* This kind of expression appears singular; yet it was not uncommon in those days: the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in several places speaks of "converting," "putting right the faith of Christ," &c., when referring to matters of mere discipline. Thus: "The Venerable Egbert about this time *converted* the monks of Iona to the right faith, in the regulation of Easter and the ecclesiastical tonsure." Anno 716; Ingram's ed.

nor of Peter, whose tradition you wilfully dispute ; and that you agree with neither the Law nor the Gospel in the observation of your Easter. For John, keeping the Paschal time according to the decrees of the Mosaiical Law, paid no attention to the Sunday : this you do not do, who keep Easter only on the Sunday. Peter used to keep Easter Sunday from the fifteenth to the twenty-first day of the moon : this you do not do, who keep Easter Sunday from the fourteenth to the twentieth day of the moon ; so that you sometimes begin the Pasch on the evening of the thirteenth day of the moon. Of such a custom the law has made no mention, nor did the Lord, the author and giver of the Gospel, on the evening of that day, but of the fourteenth day, either eat the old Pasch, or hand down to be observed by the Church, the mysteries of the New Testament in memory of His Passion. Also from your celebration of Easter, you have totally cut off the twenty-first day of the moon, which the law strongly enjoined to be kept ; and thus, as I have said, in your celebration of the greatest of festivals, you agree with neither John nor Peter, nor the Law nor the Gospel."

Colman must have felt the weight of some of these arguments. He contented himself, however, with appealing to the example and authority of Anatolius, and the Abbot Columba and his successors, many of whom had proved their sanctity by their miracles : "having no doubt that they were saints, I never cease to follow their life, manners, and discipline."

"It is certain," replied St. Wilfrid, "that Anatolius was a most holy, a most learned man, and worthy of all praise ; but what have you in common with him, since you do not keep his decrees. For, following indeed the true rule, he laid down the cycle of nineteen years, which either you do not know, or, knowing it, treat it as nothing, though observed by the whole church of Christ. On Easter Sunday he reckoned the fourteenth day of the moon in such a way as to acknowledge that this day of the moon was, on the evening of the very same day, in the Egyptian

method, the fifteenth day. In such a manner too, on Easter Sunday, he noted down the twentieth day, as to show that he believed this at the decline of the same day, to be the twenty-first. Of his rule of distinction, this shows you to be ignorant, that sometimes you most evidently keep the Pasch before the full moon, that is on the thirteenth day of the moon. With regard to your father, Columba, and his followers, whose sanctity you say you imitate, and whose rule and precepts, confirmed by miracles from heaven, you say you follow, I might reply, that in the Judgment, when many will say to the Lord that they have prophesied, and cast out devils, and wrought many miracles in His name, the Lord will answer that He never knew them; but far be it from me to say this of your fathers, because it is much more just to have a good than a bad opinion of the unknown. Therefore, I do not deny that they are the cherished ones of God, who loved God in rustic simplicity indeed, but with a pious intention. Nor do I think that their way of keeping Easter should be much urged against them, as long as no one came to show them the decrees which they were to follow, of the more perfect rule. Indeed, it is my opinion, that if any one acquainted with the Catholic calculation had visited them, they would have followed his directions, as they are proved to have followed those commandments of God which they knew and had learned. If you, however, and your associates, refuse to follow the decrees of the Apostolic See, indeed of the Universal Church, which you have heard, and which are confirmed by the sacred writings, without any doubt you sin. For although your fathers were holy, is their scanty number in a corner of the extremity of the island, to be preferred to the Universal Church of Christ, which extends throughout the world? And if Columba, so famous among you—and in truth with us too, if he were Christ's—was holy and powerful in miracles, can he be preferred to the most blessed Prince of the Apostles, to whom the Lord says:—

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and to thee I will give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven."

When St. Wilfrid had thus finished, Oswio exclaimed: "Colman, is it true that the Lord said this to the great Peter?" "It is true, O king," was Colman's answer. "Can you show that any power equally great was bestowed upon your Columba?" "No," was the reply. "Do you both," Oswio continued, "agree without any question in this, that these words were said especially to Peter, and that the Lord gave him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven?" "Yes, indeed," was their answer. "I, for my part, tell you," rejoined the king, "that he is such a door-keeper that I would not resist him; but as far as I know and can, I desire to obey his decrees in every respect, lest, perchance, when I arrive at the gates of heaven, there be no one to open, he having turned his back upon me, who is shown to hold the keys." The assessors and bystanders applauded.

The question about the form of the tonsure was likewise discussed at some length. The result of all was that Colman resigned his see, and, accompanied by all his disciples, both English and Irish, who did not wish to adopt "the Catholic Easter and the circular tonsure,"—"returned to Ireland to treat upon these matters with his brethren." St. Bede takes the opportunity to speak most warmly of the self-denial, and the other virtues of Colman and his predecessors. Their houses, dress, and food, all alike, he tells us, both in quality and quantity, were calculated not for bodily comfort, but merely for existence. They had neither money nor cattle. Land they would never willingly receive. Other gifts they immediately bestowed upon the poor. They had, therefore, no temptation to curry favour: if a king and his ministers paid them a visit, no other dish was served up but the coarse daily fare of the brotherhood.

It is no wonder that they were held in the highest

veneration by the people. If a monk or one of the secular clergy was seen on a journey, men thronged about him with bended head receiving his benediction, and with eager ears catching up his words of instruction. This custom remained long after the departure of the Irish clergy.

In place of Colman, Tuda, a holy and learned man, who had studied and been ordained in the south of Ireland, where Easter was rightly kept, was consecrated bishop of Lindisfarne. "The most meek and revered Eata," abbot of Mailros, and one of the disciples of St. Aidan, ruled all the monks of Lindisfarne that remained and chose to conform to the new calculation. A few weeks afterwards, Tuda died of the Great Pestilence. Amongst those that were convinced of their error during the late synod, was St. Cedd: returning to his diocese of the East Saxons, he abandoned his former custom, and kept Easter as it was kept at Rome. He died in the following autumn, apparently of the raging epidemic.*

The monks of Hii allowed fifty years more to pass before they received the correct calculation. Adamnan, one of their abbots, induced most of the Irish to conform (A.D. 703), but could not shake the determination of his own subjects. At last, in the year 716, a learned and holy priest, named Egbert, visited them. His sweetness of manners so won their affections and removed their prejudices, that they listened to his persuasions and received the right calculation with joy. Egbert remained with them thirteen years, and then, as if in reward for his labours, "migrated to the Lord," one Easter Sunday, after having that very morning celebrated mass.†

The Picts conformed a few years before the monks of Iona. Their king, Naiton, entreated Ceolfrid, the abbot of Wearmouth monastery, to send him arguments by which he might refute those that did not observe Easter at its proper time. The king also

* St. B. iii. c. 25, 26, and 27; and l. iv. c. 4. Edd. Vita Sti. W. x.

† Ib. l. v. c. 15, 21, and 22; and l. iii. c. 4.

requested masons to be sent to him that he might build a stone church in the Roman style. This he promised to have dedicated “in honour of the blessed Prince of the Apostles,” desiring, with all his subjects, ever “to imitate the custom of the holy Roman and Apostolic Church.” Ceolfrid’s letter in reply, is not so directly connected with the English Church as to warrant its being produced here, yet as a monument of the sense, learning, and forbearance of the English clergy, it would deserve perusal. It draws a clear line of distinction between mere matters of discipline on the one hand, such as Easter-time and the form of the tonsure, in which the Church need not be the same everywhere; and those of faith on the other, in which the Catholic Church is one. It testifies that it was the custom in every part of the Church to make frequent use of the sign of the holy cross, as a means of defence against the assaults of wicked spirits. It makes a pointed allusion to the doctrine of the Real Presence when speaking of what “all the Churches throughout the world, which together make the one Catholic Church,” would do on a given Easter-day: it says that they would prepare bread and wine for the mystery of the flesh and blood of the immaculate Lamb who has taken away the sins of the world, and that they would offer these to the Lord for the hope of their future redemption, after the suitable solemnity of lessons, prayers, and paschal ceremonies (A.D. 710).*

Whilst the Picts and Irish thus gradually submitted, the Britons long remained obstinate. So deep was their hatred of their Saxon conquerors, that they would neither eat nor pray with them. When the Saxons became Christians, the common brotherhood in Christ was a new title to forgiveness; but this the Britons eluded by the wretched plea that the Saxons were still pagans under the name of Christians. To reach the understanding of men thus steeped in hatred from their childhood, was almost a hopeless task.

Some, however, there were who boldly undertook it;

* St. B. l. v. c. 21.

and foremost amongst them was St. Aldhelm, the second abbot of Madulf's town, or Malmesbury. Under the prudent rule of this holy and learned man, the narrow dwelling of St. Madulf, his master, an Irish monk, had, by degrees, expanded into three adjoining and well-peopled and fervent monasteries.

The eyes of all Wessex were attracted to Malmesbury, watching the course of one who so little courted observation, and was so remarkable for strict seclusion as to be seldom seen abroad, except when he played upon his harp to the rustics upon the country roads, singing, at the same time, the mysteries of religion.*

When a synod met, towards the close of the seventh century, and the question of inducing the Britons to receive the Easter computation was discussed, it was resolved to employ St. Aldhelm upon this difficult mission. The result of his writings and labours within the borders of Wessex was quite decisive: all the Britons who lived under the Saxon rule conformed. Their brethren, however, in West Wales or Cornwall, as well as in other parts of the island, still disdained to receive anything from the teaching of the hated Saxon. It was not until late in the following century that they again listened to the voice of St. Peter's successor: exhorted powerfully by Elbod of Benchor, a native prelate, the whole of North Wales abandoned its schismatical course (A.D. 770); and in a few years its example was followed by the rest of the Britons or Welsh.†

* To sing upon a musical instrument was a universal accomplishment among the Anglo-Saxons. See the instance of Cædmon, the cowherd, in chap. xiv.

† St. Bede, l. v. c. 18; Ang. Sac. ii. pp. 14 and 648; St. Ald.'s Life in Boll., &c.

CHAPTER X.

ST. WILFRID CHOSEN BISHOP—ST. CHAD APPOINTED AND CONSECRATED DURING HIS ABSENCE—ST. WILFRID'S EFFORTS FOR UNIFORMITY—ELECTION AND DEATH OF VIGHARD—THE ABBOT ADRIAN—THEODORE CONSECRATED ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY—HIS JOURNEY TO ENGLAND UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF ST. BENNET BISCOP—HIS PROMPTITUDE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ENGLISH HIERARCHY—ST. CHAD'S HUMILITY, AND ST. WILFRID'S CHARITY—THE SEE OF LICHFIELD—ST. WILFRID'S PUPILS—CONSECRATION OF HIS CHURCHES AT RIPON AND HEXHAM—ST. ETHELDREDA—ENVY OF ERMENBURGA.

WHEN some little space of time had elapsed after the departure of Colman, the two kings of Northumbria, and their Witenagemotes, or assemblies of wise men, consulted together about the choice of a new bishop. All agreed that he ought to be one "that would keep the discipline of the Apostolic See," and be himself a man of irreproachable life. They unanimously declared that St. Wilfrid was the man; and although he resolutely declined the offer, his refusal was overborne. He then requested that, at least, his consecration might be such as not to incur the censures of Catholics. He had, he said, no desire to find fault with any of the bishops; yet some of them, within the last fourteen years, had been out of the communion of the Holy See, and yet had presumed to ordain even Britons and Scots, and thus to hold communion with schismatics. He therefore humbly entreated that he might be sent to Gaul for consecration. His wish was readily granted: a ship, a retinue of men, and large sums of money, were put at his disposal. He hastened to Agilbert of Paris, by whom he had been ordained priest, and who received him with joy, and after having assembled twelve bishops, publicly ordained him. The ceremony was closed by a custom peculiar to the Church in Gaul.

St. Wilfrid was made to sit on a golden chair: this the bishops raised aloft and, with their own hands, bore along in procession, singing hymns and canticles. During his absence, an unexpected course of events had put his see in possession of another. Persuaded by the Irish clergy, Oswio had sent to Canterbury, for consecration to the see of York, St. Chad, the brother of St. Cedd, "a man holy, humble, and sufficiently conversant with the Scriptures." St. Chad found, on his arrival in Kent, that Deusdedit, Honorius's successor, was dead. He therefore went to Wessex, Vini being now the only bishop in the island who had been "canonically ordained." Vini called in two of the British bishops, and ordained the applicant. St. Chad then returned to Northumbria, going from place to place on foot, and labouring and studying the Scriptures like his former teacher, St. Aidan.

St. Wilfrid, meantime, had reached England on his return from France, and finding no bishop surviving in Kent, ordained such priests and deacons as were necessary, as well as a bishop for Rochester, and then continued his journey. Arriving in Northumbria, and finding St. Chad in possession of his see, St. Wilfrid made no opposition. He performed no episcopal functions in the diocese of York, but living quietly in his monastery at Ripon, laboured to introduce uniformity of discipline with such zeal, that all the Irish in England either supported him in his efforts or left the country.*

The state of things which could thus leave a great part of England without a bishop, and then could thrust one bishop into another's see, was too anomalous to be allowed to continue.

The death of Deusdedit of Canterbury having happened a few months after the Synod of Whitby, Oswio had consulted with Egbert, the king of Kent, upon the necessities of the English Church. Egbert's desire

* St. Bede, lib. iii. c. 28; and lib. iv. c. 2; and lib. v. c. 19, sect. 417. Eddius, *Vita Sti. Wilf.* xi.—xiv. Eadmer, *Ib.* 17 and 18, apud Boll. April 24th, tom. iii.

was to have an English archbishop, in order that he and his people might be more easily instructed, instead of being taught by an interpreter. Oswio's desire, on the other hand, was the introduction of the Roman observance of Easter into the north. "For," adds St. Bede, "Oswio truly understood, although educated by the Scots, that the Roman was the Catholic and Apostolic Church." The two kings, therefore, determined to send Vigard, the bishop elect of Canterbury, to be consecrated at Rome, with powers to appoint everywhere, bishops over the churches of the Angles. Vigard accordingly departed, carrying with him Oswio's letter to the Holy See; but the pestilence which had destroyed so many in England, was ravaging Italy, and Vigard and nearly all his companions soon became its victims.*

Vitalian, who was then Pope, seeing the critical state of the English Church, exact discipline not being yet thoroughly established and nearly all its sees being vacant, exerted himself to appoint an archbishop in every way suited to the emergency. In a monastery called Niridanum, not far from Naples, there lived the Abbot Adrian, an African by birth, a man thoroughly versed both in Greek and Latin, and all ecclesiastical knowledge. This man was called into the Pope's presence, and was commanded to receive the episcopal consecration, and to repair to Britain. The humble monk declared that he was unworthy of the honour; but, at the same time, offered to point out one whose age and learning rendered him more fitted for such an office. Andrew, the monk whom he accordingly pointed out, was acknowledged by all who knew him to be worthy of the high dignity, but he was evidently too infirm for the task. Adrian, therefore, again requested a little time to find a substitute. Such a one he soon found amongst the monks of his acquaintance.

This was Theodore, a native of Tarsus, in Cilicia, who was about sixty-six years of age, and was skilled

* St. B. Hist. l. iii. c. 29; and l. iv. c. 1. Ib. Vita Sti. Benedicti, sect. 3.

in Greek and Latin literature, both ecclesiastical and secular. Theodore was only accepted on condition that Adrian should be his companion through Gaul (the abbot having been twice before in that country); and should likewise remain with him in Britain, to be his partner in teaching, and to see that he did not, like so many of his countrymen, the Greeks, introduce anything contrary to the true faith.* This being agreed to, Theodore was ordained sub-deacon. He was no longer, as hitherto, allowed to wear the tonsure in the Eastern fashion of "St. Paul," but after four months, his hair in that time having grown sufficiently long, he received the circular tonsure, then the deaconship and priesthood, and lastly was consecrated by Vitalian himself. The Pope afterwards appointed him by letter, ruler of "all the churches in the island of Britain," conceding to him, by virtue of St. Peter's authority, the see of Canterbury, and all the ancient privileges of that church.

On the day after the festival of St. Augustine the apostle of England, accompanied by Adrian, St. Theodore began his journey for a country the language and manners of which were as strange to him as they had been to St. Augustine himself. This difficulty the Pope had not overlooked: as he had appointed Adrian to watch over his orthodoxy, so he appointed St. Bennet Biscop, who had just made his third pilgrimage to Rome, to be his guide and interpreter.

Theodore and his two friends went by sea to Marseilles. Then proceeding to Arles, and giving the Pope's letters to the archbishop, they remained there until they had received permission from Ebroin, the mayor of the palace and real sovereign of the country, to continue their journey. Taking early advantage of this permission, they moved on to Paris and dwelt

* "Et ut ei doctrinæ cooperatore existens, diligenter attenderet ne quid ille contrarium veritati fidei, Græcorum more, in ecclesiam, cui preesset, introduceret" (iv. c. 1, sect. 254).

there some time with Bishop Agilbert, profiting undoubtedly by his extensive knowledge of the state of the English Church.

When the news reached Kent, that the expected archbishop was in the north of France, King Egbert despatched Redfrid, his chief ealdorman, to escort him to England (May, A.D. 669).

On the archbishop's arrival, one of his first measures was to appoint St. Bennet Biscop abbot of St. Peter's. Adrian was, meantime, detained in France, by the suspicious Ebroin: he had been negotiating, the latter thought, some alliance between the Eastern Empire and Britain, to the prejudice of France. Being at length released, he hastened to Canterbury. Some months after, St. Bennet Biscop resigned to him the care of St. Peter's Monastery, and went on a fourth pilgrimage to Rome.*

The zeal of the new archbishop outstripped the tardiness of his age. He almost immediately left Kent, and, accompanied and assisted by Adrian, he traversed every part of the island in which the English had settled. As all classes thronged with joy to welcome him, and to listen to his instructions, he found no difficulty in establishing everywhere a sound rule of life, and the canonical time of celebrating Easter.†

As he proceeded on his apostolic journey, "he ordained bishops for suitable places, and, with their assistance, corrected whatever he found to be inexact."

When he reached Northumbria, and had learned, from unimpeachable witnesses, the history of St. Chad's consecration, he commanded him to be deposed, the see of York being evidently that of another bishop. Then, for the first time, St. Chad perceived and

* St. Bede, l. iv. c. 1; Vitalian's Ep. in Wilk. Conc. i. p. 41; Vit. Sti. B. Bisc. ap. Boll.

† "Nam et libentissime ab omnibus suscipiebatur atque audiebatur, rectum vivendi ordinem, ritum paschæ celebrandæ canonicum, per omnia comitante et cooperante Hadriano, disseminabat."—St. Bede, l. iv. c. 2.

acknowledged his error, and cheerfully assented to Theodore's determination, declaring that he had never thought himself worthy of such dignity, having received it only through obedience. He withdrew to his monastery at Lastingham.

St. Wilfrid was far from entertaining resentment at having been kept three years from his see. On the contrary, having had from his friend Wulfheri, the king of the Mercians, an offer of a grant of land at Lichfield, for establishing there an episcopal see for himself, or any person whom he pleased, he offered it to St. Chad. The bishops, therefore, "fully ordained the latter, causing him to pass through all the ecclesiastical grades."*

When thus in possession of his see, St. Wilfrid lived the same mortified life as when he was in his monastery. Study and prayer, fasting and watching, were his delight. When alone, he never drank at all, either in the sharpness of winter, or the heat of summer. At table with others, he was extremely sparing. Yet there was nothing harsh or cold in his deportment. Such, on the contrary, was his amiable disposition, that he won the love of all that knew him. Oswio would have made him the guide of his intended pilgrimage to Rome, had not death intervened. Numbers of the great confided their sons to his care to be first educated, and then, either to become monks, or, if they preferred the world, to be presented in arms to the king.

The attention which he bestowed upon these his dear little ones did not hinder his discharge of other duties. He ordained many priests and deacons, and built churches in all directions, not only among the Anglo-Saxons, but among those Picts and Britons that were under the sway of Ecgrid. His church at Ripon, with its walls of smooth stone from foundation to roof, and its altar clothed with a texture of purple and gold, attracted the attention of the whole country. Its consecration was attended by multitudes of all

* St. Bede, l. iv. c. 2, sect. 258; Edd. Vita Sti. W. xiv. xv.

classes, including Ecgfrid, and his brother Elwin.* As hospitality was one of the great virtues of the Anglo-Saxons, and was, indeed, most necessary in those days of rude travelling, all that were present were feasted for three days and nights. St. Wilfrid's church at Hexham, with its foundation of smoothened stone, its lofty walls, its passages above and below, and its numerous columns and porticos, was still more the admiration of the country than even that of Ripon; and was considered the noblest edifice on this side the Alps. It was adorned by Acca, St. Wilfrid's successor, with gold, silver, and precious stones.†

The zeal and popularity of St. Wilfrid drew upon him the envy of Ermenburga, the second queen of Ecgfrid, the son and successor of Oswio. Ecgfrid's first wife, St. Etheldreda, though married once before, had always preserved, and was still determined to preserve, her virginity. Ecgfrid loved her greatly, and offered St. Wilfrid lands and riches if he would induce her to abandon her holy purpose. The bishop knew and loved too well the counsels of our Lord to accept his offers. He strengthened the royal virgin's determination, until, after a trial of twelve years, Etheldreda at last obtained her husband's consent to withdraw to a convent. There she lived and died in great sanctity. Ecgfrid's second wife was a very different character. Judging the saint's actions by the general standard of the world's policy, she began to suspect his intentions, and malign his proceedings. Bitterly, but craftily, did she speak to the king of the bishop's power, infusing into his breast her own dark, envenomed spirit. In the course of time, as we shall see, her words produced their effect.‡

* As both Bede and Malmesbury agree that Oswio had but two sons, one of whom, Alchfrid, was illegitimate, Elwin would seem to be another name for Alchfrid.

† Edd. Vit. Sti. W. xvii.—xxv.; Eadmer, 24; St. B. l. iv. c. 5.

‡ St. B. l. iv. c. 19. St. Bede received this account of St. Etheldreda from St. Wilfrid's own lips.

CHAPTER XI.

ZEAL AND PENITENTIAL SPIRIT OF ST. CHAD—OUINI, A ROYAL THANE AND MINISTER, BECOMES A LAY BROTHER AT LICHFIELD—VISION AND DEATH OF ST. CHAD—EGBERT'S VOW—HIS ATTEMPT TO GO TO GERMANY—DESPATCHES ST. WILLIBRORD—ST. THEODORE'S FIRST SYNOD—ITS CANONS—DEPOSITION OF WYNFRID—SEXWULF, THE FIRST ABBOT OF PETERBRO', SUCCEEDS HIM—DESOLATION OF THE CHURCH OF ROCHESTER.

ST. CHAD, meantime, was labouring diligently in his new see of Lichfield. In the extensive diocese thus committed to his care, stretching from the German Ocean to the borders of Wales, and from the Humber to the borders of East Anglia and Essex, and to the banks of the Thames, St. Chad still, from his love of penitential toil, moved to and fro on foot. Theodore, however, commanded him to ride whenever the journey was of considerable length, and seeing him disinclined, yet loving him for his holy motives, put him on horseback with his own hands. While discharging all the duties of a zealous bishop, St. Chad did not forget his dear retreat at Lavingham. Unable to return to it, he erected a monastery "at the Grove," somewhere in Lincolnshire, and there, from time to time, tasted the sweets of monastic retirement.

Not far from his cathedral at Lichfield, but in a secluded nook, he built a house for himself and seven or eight monks. There he joined the community during his leisure hours in prayer and study. Among this little brotherhood was a monk named Ouini. He had been prime minister, and chief of the household to St. Etheldreda.

Touched with grace, he renounced his honours, as well as every particle of his property, except his unassuming dress, and an axe and faggot. Thus

stripped of all that this world holds dear, and bearing the tokens of a country labourer, he presented himself at the monastery of Lastingham, and was received as a lay brother. He was afterwards sent to Lichfield. Whenever the rest of the monks were meditating upon the Scriptures, he, being incompetent for such duties, was employed in manual labour out of doors. One day, when thus occupied, the brethren being in the church, and St. Chad at prayer in the oratory, he heard, as he himself* used to relate, a most melodious and exulting chant. The sound came at first as if from a great distance towards the south-east. Then it gradually approached, descending from heaven towards the earth, until it reverberated on the roof of the bishop's oratory, and then as if entering, was heard from within, still filling the whole neighbourhood with its strains. When Ouini had been wondering and attentively listening for about half an hour, he again heard its "song of joy" resounding in the open air, and remounting towards that part of the heavens from which it had first come. Ouini stood for some minutes quite astonished, and, thinking what it could mean, when the bishop opened the window of the oratory, and clapped his hands, as he usually did when he wanted any one who was out in the grounds. Ouini obeyed the signal, and was told to call the seven other monks from the church immediately.

When they were all assembled, and Ouini amongst them, St. Chad exhorted them to keep peace and love towards one another, and towards all the faithful, and to press on with unwearied perseverance in the observance of their rule. The hour of his death, he added, was approaching. "For," he continued, "the guest so full of love, who was accustomed to visit our brothers, has to-day condescended to visit me too, and to call me out of the world. Going back to the church, therefore, tell the brethren both to commend in their prayers to the Lord my departure, and to be

* "Dignus cui fidem narranti audientes accommodarent."—St. B. l. iv. c. 3, sect. 260.

mindful to prepare by vigils, prayers, good works, for their own departure, the hour of which is uncertain."

After much conversation on such topics, the monks received his blessing, and departed, full of sadness. Ouini, however, immediately returned; and prostrating upon the ground, said, "I beseech you, my father, may I ask you something?" "Ask anything you please," was the reply. "I beseech you to tell me what was that canticle, which I heard, of joyous ones, coming from heaven upon this oratory, and after a time returning again to heaven?" "If you heard the voice of the canticle," answered St. Chad, "and perceived the heavenly assemblies descending, I command you, in the name of the Lord, not to mention this to any one, before my decease. But they were indeed angelic spirits, who came to invite me to heavenly rewards, and promised to return after seven days, and to take me with them."

Immediately after this, a sort of languor seized the holy bishop, and daily increased. On the seventh day, after having fortified himself for his departure "by receiving the body and blood of the Lord, his holy soul, freed from the prison of the body, and conducted, as it is right to believe, by accompanying angels, went as had been promised to him, to eternal joys."*

There was at this time, in Ireland, a monk of great sanctity named Egbert. He was the person who was in course of time to persuade the monks of Hii to receive the right calculation of Easter. He was one of the many Englishmen who, at the time when the Irish were converting the north of England, used to throng to Ireland, to study or to become monks. The hospitality of the Irish was so great that food, lodging, books, and masters were furnished gratuitously to all comers. Egbert and St. Chad, when young men, had there been companions in prayer, chastity, the study of the Holy Scriptures, and all the

* "Postquam obitum suum dominici corporis et sanguinis perceptione munivit, soluta ab ergastulo corporis anima sancta," &c.—St. B. l. iv. c. iii. sect. 262.

duties of the monastic life. St. Chad returned to England; but Egbert remained, because, when suffering under the Great Pestilence, he had bound himself by vow never to return home, but, in prayer and fasting, to live and die as a stranger and pilgrim.* Egbert survived St. Chad forty-seven years. A considerable time after the death of the latter, Hygbald, an abbot in Lincolnshire, went to Ireland to visit Egbert. They conversed much on the lives of the first Fathers of the English Church; and, at last, began to speak of St. Chad. Egbert then mentioned a circumstance which corroborates, as well as completes, Ouini's account. "I know," said he, "a man in this island, still remaining in the flesh, who, when that holy man passed from the world, beheld the soul of his brother Cedd, with a host of angels, descend from heaven, and having taken his soul with them, return to the heavenly kingdom." Whether Egbert here spoke of himself, adds Venerable Bede, or of some other person, is to us uncertain, "but nevertheless this, that what such a man has said is true, cannot be uncertain."

St. Chad was at first buried close to the church of St. Mary; but when the church "of the most blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles," was erected there, his bones were translated into that building. "In both of which places, as a proof of his power, miraculous cures are constantly wrought in great numbers."† Wynfrid, who had been a considerable time his deacon, was ordained in his place by Theodore of Canterbury.

Mention having been made of Egbert, the holy companion of St. Chad's earlier life, something may here be added of what he did for the conversion of Germany. Thirsting for the salvation of souls, he determined to go and preach to the numerous tribes

* St. B. l. iii. c. 27.

† "Sepultus est primo quidem juxta ecclesiam Sanctæ Mariæ; sed postmodum, constructa ibidem ecclesia beatissimi Apostolorum Principis Petri, in eandem sunt ejus ossa translata. In quo utroque loco, ad indicium virtutis illius, solent crebra sanitatum miracula operari."

—St. B. l. iv. c. 3.

of that country. If he failed, he could, at least, go to Rome, "to see and adore the thresholds of the blessed Apostles and Martyrs of Christ." When he had accordingly begun his preparations, a monk came to him, and told him that, in a vision, he had seen his former superior, the deceased Boisil, abbot of Mailros, and by his directions was sent to warn Egbert that he should go, not to Germany, but to the monastery of Columba. Egbert, however, continued his preparations, merely desiring the monk not to mention the vision to any one, as it might prove to be an illusion. A few days afterwards, the monk came again: the vision, he said, had been repeated. Egbert took little notice, though he feared that the brother's account was too true. Scarcely had he embarked, when a storm arose which swept away a part of the ship's cargo, and hurled the vessel high upon the beach. Declaring that the storm had been sent on his account, Egbert landed. One of his companions, named Victbert, persisted in the project; and arriving in Frisia, preached there to King Rathbed and his people for two years "without any fruit." He returned to Ireland to live, as he had before, in silent penance.*

Egbert was not yet disheartened. He sent St. Willibrord and twelve companions. A change had come over the government of the nearer Frisia. Its king, Rathbed, had been expelled by Pepin, the duke of the Franks. The missionaries were aided by the influence of the conqueror, and soon converted great numbers. Being thus far completely successful, St. Willibrord hastened to Rome, in order that, with the Pope's "licence and benediction, he might enter upon the desired work of evangelizing the nations; at the same time also hoping to receive from him the relics of the

* St. B. v. 9, &c., sect. 376—388. See also Pertz's Mon., and the Grants of Pepin and Charles Martel in Bouquet, tom. iv. pp. 683, 689, 699. "And that pious man, Ecbryht, converted the monks in the island of Hii to right, so that they observed Easter duly, and the ecclesiastical tonsure."—(Sax. Ch. an. 716, ap. Monum.) He died there in A.D. 729.—Ib.

blessed Apostles and Martyrs of Christ." He was consecrated Archbishop of Utrecht.

What St. Willibrord thus began, St. Boniface, a monk of Wessex, completed; earning the glorious title of Apostle of Germany.

By the time of the consecration of Wynfrid, St. Chad's deacon, the sees were filled, the question of Easter settled, and greater exactness in various minor practices introduced: what remained to be done, required the guidance and sanction of an episcopal synod. This, accordingly, Theodore assembled at Hertford. Its acts have been inserted by Venerable Bede in his history, and have thus escaped the too general destruction of ancient monuments. Being those of the first synod after the new Church of the English had been thoroughly and canonically settled, they deserve to be quoted at length. They are as follows:—

"In the name of the Lord our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who for ever reigns and guides his Church, it has been determined that we should assemble, according to the custom of the venerable canons, to treat of the necessary business of the Church. We have, therefore, met on the 24th September, the first indiction, at the place called Hertford; I, indeed, Theodore, having, although unworthy, been appointed by the Apostolic See, bishop of the church of Canterbury; and our fellow-bishop and brother, the most reverend Bisi, bishop of the East Angles; with whom also our brother and fellow-bishop Wilfrid, bishop of the Northumbrian nation, was present, by his deputies. There were also present our brothers and fellow-bishops,* Putta, bishop of

* The term "Sacerdotes" and "Consacerdotes" is here used almost as frequently, and in the same signification, as *episcopi*. In many places of St. Gregory of Tours in the same way. Yet both *sacerdos* and *sacerdotalis* are applied to the bishop only inasmuch as his *priestly* character is concerned, that is, to what is common to him and priests generally so called. In the very Council of Hertford mentioned above, we read: "Ut *episcopi* atque *clerici peregrini*.....

Rochester; Leutherius, bishop of the West Saxons; Wynfrid, bishop of the province of the Mercians. And when, having assembled together, we had sat down, each of us according to his rank, I said: 'My most beloved brethren, I request, for the fear and love of our Redeemer, that we all treat together concerning our faith, so that whatever has been decreed and defined by the holy and praiseworthy Fathers, may be kept by all of us incorruptly.' I continued with these words and with very many others, which were in reference to charity, and to the preservation of the unity of the Church. And when I had finished the introductory discourse, I asked each of them in order, whether he consented to keep those canonical decrees which had been made of old by the Fathers? In answer to which, all our fellow-bishops said: 'Most rightly is it the determination of us all, with a ready mind, most cheerfully to keep whatever the canons of the holy Fathers have defined.' I immediately laid before them the book of canons, and pointed out to them ten passages, which as I knew them to be very necessary for us, I had marked in different parts of the said book; and I made the request that these things might be kept by all with great diligence.

"First passage or chapter: That we all unanimously keep the holy day of Easter on the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the moon of the first month.

"2nd. That no bishop invade the diocese of another: but be content with the government of the people intrusted to him.

"3rd. That no bishop disquiet, in anything, any of the monasteries consecrated to God, or deprive them by violence of any of their property.

"4th. That the monks themselves do not migrate from place to place, that is from monastery to monastery, except when sent out by their own abbot; but

nullique eorum liceat ullum officium *sacerdotale*.....agere" (cap. vi.). St. Egbert's Penitential defines a "Presbyter" as a sacerdos, *i.e.* a person "sacrum dans" (l. iii. c. 16).

remain in that obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion.

“5th. That no cleric, leaving his own bishop, should run up and down wherever he pleased ; and that when coming from any other place, he should not be received without the commendatory letters of his own bishop. But if, after being once received, he will not return when required, that both the receiver and the person that has been received, shall incur excommunication.

“6th. That foreign bishops and clergy be content with the gift of hospitality offered them ; and that none of them exercise any priestly function without the permission of the bishop in whose diocese they are known to be.

“7th. That the synod meet twice every year. On account, however, of various obstacles arising, we all unanimously agreed to meet once every year, on the Kalends of August, at the place which is called Clofeshoeh.*

“8th. That no bishop put himself before another by ambition ; but that all know the time and rank of his ordination.

“9th. It has been treated in common that the number of the bishops should be increased, as the number of the faithful increases : but of this we are for the present silent.

“10th. That no one be allowed to contract marriage, unless it be legitimate. That no one commit incest. That no one leave his own wife except, as the holy Gospel teaches, on account of fornication. That if any one has expelled his own wife when united to him by legitimate wedlock, if he wish to be a Christian indeed, that he marry no second one, but so remain, or be reconciled to his wife.

“These points, therefore, having been discussed and

* Commonly supposed to be Cliff, near Rochester ; but by Sumner conjectured to be Abingdon, formerly called Sheovesham. See *Camd. Brit. Col.* 149.

defined in common, it was resolved, in order that no scandal of contention might afterwards arise from any of us, and in order that there might be no confusion in making these things known, that every one of us should, by his subscription in his own handwriting, confirm what had been defined. This judgment and decision I dictated to Titillus the notary.—Done in the month and indiction above written.

“Whoever, therefore, shall attempt to contravene in any way, and to infringe this decision made according to the decrees of the canons, confirmed also by our consent and our subscription in our own hand, let him know that he is separated from all priestly office, and from our communion. May Divine Grace keep us safe, living in the unity of His Holy Church.”*

The consequences of this synod were undoubtedly highly beneficial; but the English Church, in the midst of great progress, was yet sharply tried. Winfrid, the bishop of the Mercians, being charged with some act of disobedience, was deposed by Theodore. He retired to a monastery, and there, by a most edifying life, made atonement for his fault. Sexwulf, the first abbot of the monastery of Peterborough, and its joint founder along with Peada of Mercia, was ordained in his place. “He was greatly God’s friend,” says the *Saxon Chronicle*, “and all the country loved him; and he was very nobly born, in a worldly sense, and rich; but he is now much richer, being with Christ.”†

Two years after this, Edilred, the king of Mercia, burst in upon Kent with fire and sword. Churches and monasteries shared the common misfortune. When the desolating host had withdrawn, Putta of Rochester either found himself so destitute, or else was so amazed at the ruin in which his see was involved, that he went to Sexwulf of Lichfield, obtained from him possession

* St. B. l. iv. c. 5.

† An. 655. St. Bede, l. iv. c. 6 and 12; Will. of Mal. de Gest. Pont. lib. i. 233.

of a church with a small patch of ground, and there lived and died, never quitting the spot unless invited to teach some rising church the ecclesiastical chant. Theodore, meantime, had consecrated Cuichelm in Putta's place; but quite dispirited by the utter poverty of his see, Cuichelm, like Putta, abandoned his charge. Gefmund was then appointed.*

* St. Bede, l. iv. c. 12.

CHAPTER XII.

RESULTS OF QUEEN ERMENBURGA'S ENVY—NEW ECCLESIASTICAL DIVISION OF NORTHUMBRIA AND UNCANONICAL DEPOSITION OF ST. WILFRID—APPEAL TO ROME—CONVERSION OF FRISIA—PERILS OF ST. WILFRID—SYNOD AT ROME—ST. WILFRID'S CAUSE PREVAILS: HIS FORBEARANCE—A PAPAL LEGATE ACCOMPANIES HIM BACK TO ENGLAND—COUNCIL OF HATFIELD, AND EXAMINATION INTO THE FAITH OF THE ENGLISH—PRIVILEGES OF PETERBOROUGH ABBEY—THE TWO ARCHIEPISCOPAL SEES—ST. WILFRID SHUT UP IN THE FORTRESS OF BRUNANBURG—DROUGHT IN SUSSEX—CONVERSION OF THAT COUNTRY AND OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT—MONASTERY OF SELSEY—VISION OF THE TWO APOSTLES—ALL ENGLAND NOW CHRISTIAN—ITS FIRST FERVOUR.

ERMENBURGA, the Northumbrian queen, had, all this while, been gradually infusing into her husband's mind a prejudice against St. Wilfrid. Five years after the synod of Hertford, her envious words produced their effect. Ecgfrid, the king, determined to expel St. Wilfrid. To obtain the consent of Theodore of Canterbury, he invited him to Northumbria, lavished upon him kindness and gifts, and, finally, induced him to pronounce sentence of deposition against the bishop. Theodore then divided the single diocese of Northumbria into that of Deira, with its see at Hexham or Lindisfarne; and that of Bernicia, with its see at York. He also appointed a bishop of Lindsey, or that northern portion of Lincolnshire, which then, for a brief period, had been seized by Northumbria; as well as another over those Picts who acknowledged the sovereignty of their English neighbours. These changes were undoubtedly useful; but the manner of accomplishing them appears harsh and uncanonical. St. Wilfrid was absent at the time, but hearing what had been done, and that Theodore had thus acted without the assistance of any other bishop, he pre-

sented himself before the king and the archbishop, and requested to know on what account they had stripped him, in this robber-fashion, of the property which kings had given for the love of God. They told him that they found no fault with him, but would keep to their decision. As usually happens, the courtiers made merry at the expense of the prelate who thus lay under the king's displeasure. Seeing this, St. Wilfrid said to them: "On the anniversary of this day on which now, through envy, you laugh at my condemnation, you will weep bitterly in your own confusion."

That very day twelvemonth, the dead body of the king's brother was borne through the streets of York, while the people, in the excess of their grief, wept and tore their hair and garments. The prince had been slain in a bloody battle with the Mercians. Hitherto Ecgfrid had been everywhere victorious: the strength of the whole country to the south of the Humber had once assembled against him at the call of Wulfheri, the late king of Mercia, and had been completely crushed. Henceforth, however, victory forsook the Northumbrian standard. When, at last, Ecgfrid ventured on a fiery inroad among the Picts, he was defeated and slain.*

St. Wilfrid, meantime, had consulted his fellow-bishops, and by their advice appealed to Rome. Before his departure, he was requested by Ethelred of Mercia to show to Pope Agatho, "by letter and by message how his brothers, Peada and Wulfheri, and Saxulf the abbot, had built a minster which was called Medeshamstede, and that they had freed it against king and against bishop of all services; and he (Ethelred) besought him that he would assent to it with his rescript and with his blessing."† Having consented to be the bearer of this petition, and leaving his beloved monks in great affliction (they amounted to "many thousands"), St. Wilfrid sailed to Frisia, and was honour-

* St. B. l. iv. c. 12; Eddius, Vit. Sti. W. xix.—xxiv.

† Sax. Chron. an. 675, ap. Monum. Hist. Brit. 1848.

ably received by the king. Seeing that he and his subjects were all pagans, the bishop stayed amongst them the whole winter, and converted the greater part of the chiefs and many thousands of the people. Whilst he was thus engaged, a letter came from Theodoric, a king of the Franks, and his Majordomus Ebroin, "the impious duke," demanding the person, or at least the head, of St. Wilfrid. To this they had been instigated by messages from Northumbria. The Frisian king, in presence of a multitude of his subjects, of the Frankish ambassadors, and of St. Wilfrid and his companions, commanded the letter to be read, and then tore it in pieces and threw it into the fire, exclaiming, "Tell your lord, this was my answer: So may the Creator of all things, tearing in pieces destroy, and consuming reduce to ashes, the kingdom and life of him who is perjured to his God, and does not keep the treaty which he has made."*

The conduct of Dagobert, another of the Frankish kings, was the reverse of that of Theodoric. Dagobert had, in his youth, been an exile in Ireland; and it was partly through the exertions of St. Wilfrid, that he had been restored to his friends and put in possession of his kingdom. He offered, in token of his gratitude, to bestow upon the saint the see of Strasburg. Finding him, however, firm in his refusal, he loaded him with presents and sent with him, as a companion, Deodatus, the bishop of Toul.

Arriving in Italy, St. Wilfrid found that his enemies were still pursuing him: Berether, the king of Lombardy,† informed him that they had offered him immense sums, if he would detain him prisoner. Having

* Eddius, xxiv.—xxvi. Edd. was a personal friend of St. Wilfrid.

† King of "Campania" (Edd. 28, ap. Gale). This Campania being mentioned immediately after Gaul, and being again mentioned (xxxii.) when St. Wilfrid is described as hastening back from Rome to Britain, *just before* crossing the mountains into France, cannot be the classical Campania. When explained by what the "king of Campania" says of his exile and his connection with the king of the Huns, it must, undoubtedly, mean the kingdom of Lombardy.

scorned their offers, he now received the bishop most kindly and saw him safe to Rome.

Upon St. Wilfrid's arrival, as Theodore's messenger was already there, Pope Agatho called together, in the basilica of our Saviour, a synod of more than fifty bishops and priests. The question of St. Wilfrid's appeal being discussed, it was at once apparent, that there was no real charge against him, and that his adversaries, in their conduct towards him, had, in many ways, transgressed the canons. St. Wilfrid, being now introduced to offer his petition, stated the history of his expulsion, and requested that the invaders of his see should be removed by authority of the Roman synod. He added, that he did not wish to make a charge against Theodore; nor to prevent the appointment of a greater number of bishops, but only that it should be done by the joint authority of the episcopal body, and that the new bishops should be chosen from the clergy of the church over which they were going to preside. The petition closed with a declaration of unreserved submission and obedience to whatever the Holy See might enjoin.

The Pope praised the humility and love of peace that was conspicuous in what the saint had done. Then the synod unanimously declared, that the bishops who had been ordained in his place should be expelled; that he himself should be restored, and should, with the consent of a synod, choose such bishops for "his assistants," as would join peaceably in his labours.

When the synod had broken up, St. Wilfrid made a pause for a few days, to pray at the holy places, and to collect relics and church ornaments, and then hurried back to Britain.* It is probable that he was accompanied to England by St. Bennet Biscop, the abbot of Wearmouth, and "John, the archcantor of St. Peter's." John's mission was twofold; it was to teach the monks at Wearmouth the Roman style of singing, and also to examine diligently the faith of the English Church. Agatho, the Pope, was more

* Eddius, xxv.—xxxì.

than usually solicitous for the state of the Church, both on account of the recent heresy of several of the bishops of Constantinople, and also, it would seem, because, Theodore of Canterbury being a Greek, it was necessary to see whether England was “undefiled with the contagion of heretics.” John carried with him the acts of a Lateran Council held by St. Martin, the Pope, in 649. This council had condemned both the Eastern heresies and the “Impious Typos” by which the Greek emperor forbade every one to utter either the Catholic, or the heretical doctrine.*

Soon after John's arrival, therefore, in order that it might be proved that the English were altogether untainted with the Eutychian and Monothelite heresies, Theodore called the bishops and “great numbers” of the more learned of the clergy, to a synod at Hatfield, in Yorkshire. The agreement of all in the sound Catholic doctrine was found to be unanimous. From the synodal letter in which this unanimity was recorded, St. Bede has preserved a few extracts.

The letter thus begins :—“In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour, Theodore, by the grace of God, archbishop of the island of Britain, and of the city of Canterbury, presiding, the venerable men the other bishops of the island of Britain, being his co-assessors, the most holy Gospels being laid before us, in the place which is called by the Saxon name of Haethfelth,—discussing together, we have laid down the right and orthodox faith, as our Lord Jesus Christ incarnate delivered it to those of his disciples who

* St. B. Hist. l. iv. c. 18. St. B.'s Life of St. Benn. Bisc. sect. 4, 5, 6. The principal errors which had been broached since the time of Arius were four in number: first, that the Holy Ghost was not God (condemned in the first Council of Constantinople, A.D. 381); secondly, that Christ had two persons (the Nestorian heresy, condemned in the Council of Ephesus, A.D. 431); thirdly, that Christ had but one nature (the Eutychian or Jacobite heresy, condemned in the Council of Chalcedon, A.D. 451); and fourthly, that Christ had but one will (the Monothelite heresy, condemned in the third Council of Constantinople, A.D. 680 and 681). All the councils here mentioned were general councils.

enjoyed his visible presence, and heard his words ; and as the Creed of the holy Fathers, and as, in short, all the holy and general councils, and the whole body of praiseworthy doctors of the Catholic Church have transmitted it. Therefore, following these, we, making a pious and orthodox confession of faith according to their divinely-inspired doctrine, believe unanimously, and, in conformity with the holy Fathers, confess, properly and truly, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost to be Trinity Consubstantial in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, that is, one God in three subsistencies or consubstantial persons, of equal glory and honour.” “ We receive the five holy and general Councils of the Fathers, blessed and pleasing to God ; that is, those who, to the number of three hundred and eighteen, were assembled at Nice against the most impious Arius and his dogmas ; and the hundred and fifty at Constantinople against the poison of Macedonius and Eudoxius and their dogmas ; and the two hundred at the first Council of Ephesus against the most wicked Nestorius and his dogmas ; and the six hundred and thirty at Chalcedon against Eutyches and Nestorius and their dogmas ; and those that were assembled at the fifth Council, the second of Constantinople, in the time of Justinian the younger, against Theodore, Theodoret, and Ibas, and their dogmas against Cyril ;” * “ and the synod which was held in the city of Rome, in the time of the most blessed Pope Martin.” “ We acknowledge and glorify our Lord Jesus, as these glorified him, adding or subtracting nothing ; and we anathematize, with heart and mouth, those whom they anathematized ; and we receive those whom they received, glorifying God the Father without beginning, and his only-begotten Son born of the Father before time (*‘ sæcula ’*), and the Holy Spirit proceeding ineffably from the Father and the Son, as

* The sixth General Council, the third of Constantinople, assembled at the command of Agatho, in the very year (A.D. 680) in which the Council of Hatfield was held. The former condemned the Monothelites.

they preached whom we have mentioned above, the holy apostles, and prophets, and doctors. And to this all of us who, with Theodore, the archbishop, have laid down the Catholic faith, attach our signatures."

It was probably in this stage of the proceedings that St. Wilfrid produced the papal rescript, confirmatory of the privileges of the monastery of Medeshamstede. "I, Agatho, Pope of Rome," it began, "greet well the worshipful Ethelred, king of the Mercians, and the Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury, and the bishop of the Mercians, Saxulf, who was formerly abbot, and all the abbots who are in England, with the greeting of God and my blessing. I have heard the desire of King Ethelred, and of Archbishop Theodore, and of Bishop Saxulf, and of Abbot Cuthbald. You wish that the abbey of Medeshamstede (or Peterborough) should be 'Roman and Apostolical;' that the blessed Peter, present to us in body, may be ever present to you in spirit; and that those who are prevented from making a pilgrimage to the tombs of the apostles, may obtain the same spiritual privileges by a pilgrimage to St. Peter's Church at Medeshamstede. It is my will that it be in all wise even as you have spoken. And I ordain, on behalf of God and St. Peter, and of all the saints, and of every person in orders, that neither king, nor bishop, nor earl, nor any man, have any claim nor any tribute, gold, or military service from the abbacy of Medeshamstede. I also ordain, that the shire-bishop be not so bold as to perform any ordination or consecration within the abbacy, unless the abbot beseech it of him, nor have any claim there for bishop-wite or synod, or for any kind of thing. And it is my will that the abbot be holden as legate of Rome over all the island, and that whatsoever abbot shall be there chosen by the monks, he be consecrated by the archbishop of Canterbury. I will and concede, that whatever man shall have made a vow to go to Rome, which he may be unable to fulfil,.....let him go to the minster of Medeshamstede, and have the same

forgiveness of Christ and St. Peter, and of the abbot, and of the monks, that he would have if he went to Rome.....Now will I say, in a word, that whoso observeth this rescript, and this decree, let him be ever dwelling with God Almighty in the kingdom of heaven; and whoso breaketh through it, let him be excommunicated and thrust down with Judas, and with all the devils in hell, unless he turn to repentance. Amen." The king immediately added to the original grant; and all the bishops, and St. Wilfrid amongst them, attached their signatures.*

The king added to his signature this remarkable expression: "These lands I give to St. Peter, all as freely as I myself possessed them, and so that none of my successors take anything therefrom. If any shall do so, let him have the curse of the Pope of Rome, and the curse of all bishops, and of all those who are here witnesses; and this I confirm with Christ's token, ✠." The privileges of Peterborough being thus recognized, York and Canterbury, by authority of Pope Agatho, were declared to be the archiepiscopal sees; Canterbury still holding the chief place, as in the days of St. Augustine.†

Thus far the synod had proceeded, it would seem, with peace and unanimity, and its decrees were confirmed by John, the archcantor, in his capacity as legate of the Holy See.‡ Very different was its termination. St. Wilfrid's cause was now to be heard.

The proceedings at Rome were disclosed. The sentence, with its seals and bulla, was displayed. Yet there was hesitation, there was even obstinacy. Did any one allege that the Pope had exceeded his authority? Not one. But the queen had not lost her envious spirit; and the king had not the courage to

* Sax. Chron. ap. Mon. Hist. Br. an. 675; Kemble's Codex Diplom. vol. v. No. 990.

† Kemble's Cod. Diplom. No. 991; Sax. Chron. A.D. 675. These circumstances are not mentioned in the order of the year, according to the usual plan of the Sax. Chron.

‡ St. B. l. iv. c. 17. "Intererat huic synodo, pariterque Catholicæ fidei decreta firmabat," &c.—St. B. iv. 18.

prefer simple obedience to an appearance of inconsistency. The courtiers modelled their behaviour accordingly; and some rashly declared (having no grounds whatever for their assertion), that the writings had been bought for money.*

The end of all the debate was, that St. Wilfrid, having barely time to utter a word or two of encouragement to his friends, was despoiled of everything, and thrust into a dungeon in the fortress of Brunanburgh. His attendants were dispersed. No one was allowed to see him. While pining there, in a place to which the rays of the sun seldom penetrated, and where not even a lamp was allowed to dispel some of its horror, he received from the king an assurance that he should have a part of his former diocese and many gifts, if only he would obey the royal commands, and would undertake to say, that the decrees which he had brought from the Holy See were not genuine. He replied, calmly but boldly, that he would rather lose his head than make such an avowal.†

The king and queen, meantime, were going from place to place, with royal pomp and feasting. They arrived, at last, at the monastery of Coldingham, in Berwickshire. The next morning, the abbess waited upon the queen, and was shocked to find her with her limbs contracted—drawn tight together, and her whole

* I have not found, in any of the writers who were contemporary or nearly so, or in any document preserved by later writers, the statement that the examination into the soundness of faith of the English Church, the synodal publication of the Pope's confirmation of privileges, and the condemnation of St. Wilfrid, all occurred in the same synod. Yet the probability that they did thus occur, seems to me so strong that I have not hesitated thus to state them in the text. Certain it is, St. Wilfrid presented the Bull of Privileges at a great national synod; that this synod met at Hatfield; and that it met in the year 680, soon after a synod of one hundred and twenty-five bishops had been held at Rome by Agatho; that John, the arch-cantor, subscribed to the acts of this synod, and that St. Wilfrid, attaching his signature, wrote the emphatic words,—“Wilfrid, who by apostolic favour is demanding back the see of York.”—(Kem. Cod. Dip.) Therefore, I think it very probable that all these matters were transacted in one and the same synod.

† Eddius, xxxi.—xxxv.

appearance betokening the approach of death. She hurried to the king, and telling him what had happened, chided him for his injustice towards St. Wilfrid, although innocent, and supported by the "letter of the Apostolic See, which has, along with holy Peter, the power of binding and loosing." She added, that if he would restore the bishop, or, at least, set him free, she doubted not that the queen would recover : otherwise she would die, and the king himself would not escape punishment. Æcgfrid consented so far as to give St. Wilfrid his liberty.*

The holy bishop retired to Mercia. There he was honourably received by the king's nephew, and receiving from him a grant of land, founded a small monastery. The queen happened to be Æcgfrid's sister. As soon, therefore, as she heard that St. Wilfrid was living peaceably in Mercia, she and the king sent an order to him to be gone within twenty-four hours. He went to Wessex. The queen of that kingdom was Ermenburga's sister. She too ordered him to be gone. He then entered the territory of the South Saxons, a country, the hills and dense forests of which had preserved its independence. Its inhabitants were pagans. St. Wilfrid narrated to Ædilwalch, the king, his wanderings and persecutions. The king pledged his word to protect him, adding, that neither gifts nor war should induce him to break his promise. St. Wilfrid did not omit the opportunity of announcing the Good Tidings to the king and his people.†

The only trace of Christianity in the whole country, was a very small kind of monastery, shut in by woods and the sea, where an Irish monk, named Dicul, presided over five or six other religious, all of them "serving the Lord in lowliness and poverty." Neither

* Eddius, xxxviii.

† Ib. 39 and 40. Eddius clearly intimates, though he does not expressly say, that Ædilwalch was instructed in the faith, and baptized by St. Wilfrid. St. Bede, on the other hand, says expressly, that Ædilwalch had, a short time before, received baptism in Mercia (l. iv. c. 13).

the example of their life, nor their preaching, had any effect. Perhaps, however, their prayers it was that brought the blessed Wilfrid to their country. This great bishop's preaching produced some immediate fruit; but the sufferings under which the whole nation lay, gave him an opportunity of assisting both their souls and bodies. For three years, the country had been scourged with excessive drought. No rain fell; no corn or grass sprung up; everything withered,—herbage, cattle, men. In their despair, the famished people, it is said, used to go in troops of forty or fifty, and standing, hand in hand, on the edge of the cliffs, to plunge together headlong into the abyss.

St. Wilfrid, touched with pity, began to seek some means of relief. He soon observed that the rivers and sea abounded with fish, while the people's whole art of fishing was limited to the capture of eels. The bishop borrowed a few of the nets used for this purpose, and sent some of his people to fish, out at sea. They had immediate success: three hundred fish, of every kind, crowded their nets. St. Wilfrid divided the spoil into three parts: one for the poor; one for the owners of the nets; and one for his own people, the partners of his exile.

Numbers now thronged to hear him; and on the very day of their baptism, a soft copious rain poured down, and again the fields smiled, and soon yielded, once more, an abundant harvest. The inhabitants saw, in all this, the mercy of God; and, says St. Bede, "with greater pleasure began to hope for heavenly things at his preaching, from whose ministry they received temporal blessings."

Ædilwalch now made a grant to St. Wilfrid of the peninsula called Seal Island, or Selsey. It is washed by the sea on all sides, except the west. The isthmus is about a stone's-throw across. The peninsula contained eighty-seven families of land.* There the bishop founded a monastery for the monks, his com-

* "Terram octoginta septem familiarum," in St. Bede; "cum territoriiis 87 mansionum," in Eddius, xl.

panions, and for a few others who embraced their rule of life. The grant had comprised two hundred and fifty slaves, both men and women, who had probably been employed in tilling the ground. These poor creatures were instructed and baptized; and then received their freedom.*

In this monastery, soon after its foundation, there occurred a circumstance so remarkable, and yet so well authenticated, that it ought not to be omitted. Venerable Bede tells us that it was "one which the most reverend Bishop Acca often used to tell me, and to assert that it was related to him by most trustworthy monks of that monastery." †

The Great Pestilence which had swept away so many bishops and nobles, soon after the Council of Whitby, was only one of a long series of similar visitations. One of these scourges fell upon Sussex, while as yet in the first glow of conversion. As the monks at Selsey soon lost several of their brotherhood, they agreed to spend three days in fasting and prayer. Their petition was, that those who lay under the distemper might either be freed from the death that was impending, or when carried off by it, be delivered from everlasting damnation.

There was then in the monastery a Saxon child who had been recently baptized, and who had now been confined to his bed for some time, by the prevailing epidemic. On the second of the three days which had been set aside for prayer and fasting, the

* St. Bede, l. iv. c. 13.

† Stevenson, the Protestant editor of the English Historical Society's edition of the works of St. Bede, makes the following conclusive remarks upon a charge of interpolation sometimes made regarding this passage (p. 279):—

"Here the MSS. vary considerably in the numbers which they prefix to this and the following chapters. Bishop More's MS. omits the title of this and the following chapter. In one of the two Cottonian MSS. Chapter XIV. is totally omitted, and in the margin of the leaf an old hand has written:—'Hic deest folium.' Hence has arisen the opinion that the present account of Oswald's miracles is an interpolation—a charge from which its appearance in More's and one of the Cottonian copies exempts it."

sick boy happened to be alone, when, “by the appointment of God, suddenly the most blessed Princes of the Apostles deigned to appear to him. For he was a boy with a soul very simple and meek, and keeping with sincere devotion the sacraments of faith, which he had received. Saluting him, therefore, with very kind words, the Apostles said, ‘Son, fear not the death about which you are troubled; for this day we will conduct you to the heavenly kingdoms. But you must first wait until mass is celebrated; and so having received the viaticum of the body and blood of the Lord, freed thus from both your sickness and from death, you will have been raised to eternal joy in heaven.’”

They added that the prayer and fasting agreed to had moved God to mercy, and that no one else in the monastery or contiguous lands would die of the pestilence; that this cessation had been obtained at the intercession of Oswald, formerly king of Northumbria; that the monks were to examine their registers of the dead, and would then find that it was the anniversary of his death that very day; and that they were to say masses in all the chapels of the monastery, both in thanksgiving that their prayers had been heard, and in memory of King Oswald, and so to conclude their fast, and refresh their bodies as well as their souls.

As the Apostles had commanded, the boy called Eappa, the abbot, and told him what he had seen. Eappa carefully questioned him about their dress and appearance. Being satisfied with his answers, he immediately went to consult his “year-book.” He found that Oswald had indeed been slain on that very day. Then “having assembled the monks, he ordered a dinner to be prepared, masses to be said, and all to communicate in the usual manner. At the same time, he commanded a particle from the same sacrifice of the oblation of the Lord to be carried to the sick boy.” The boy died that very day; and, as he had foretold, was the last victim of the pestilence. Wonderful was the zeal with which many who heard these things, had recourse to prayer and fasting. From

that time the festival of King Oswald was annually kept, "not only in that monastery, but also in many other places."*

The conversion of Sussex was followed by that of the Isle of Wight. This island had been wrested from Wessex by Wulfheri, king of Merca, by whom it was given, together with the adjoining districts of Hampshire, to the king of Sussex. It was afterwards reconquered by Cædwalla, a young and fiery pagan, who had claimed, and, after several attempts, had won the crown of Wessex. This king strove to complete his success in the Isle of Wight, by a piece of policy utterly ruthless; by no less than the extermination of the whole population, and the re-colonization of the island with people from Wessex. In the midst of the struggle, and even of the work of extermination, various monks and priests were endeavouring, and with some success, to save, at least, the souls of the unhappy victims of this barbarous war. Whilst the event was yet doubtful, Cædwalla, pagan as it seems he still was, had vowed to Christ, that if he succeeded, he would devote one fourth of the entire island to his service. When the struggle was over, he kept his word, giving the promised portion to St. Wilfrid. The latter gave it to his nephew Bernwin, in order that, with the assistance of a priest, whom his saintly uncle left with him, he might complete the work of conversion.†

Thus, at length, after a period of about ninety years from the first coming of St. Augustine, the whole of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms had embraced the faith. Kent, Essex, Northumbria, East Anglia, Mercia, Wessex, Sussex, and, lastly, the Isle of Wight, all, at last, had heard, and joyfully welcomed, the "Good Tidings."

As a proof of the great fervour with which the faith was thus embraced, one fact will suffice. Among

* St. Bede, l. iv. c. 14.

† St. Bede, c. 13 and 16; Saxon Chron.; Will. of Malm. Ges. Reg. l. i. sect. 34.

the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of St. Ethelbert of Kent, there were no fewer than eight canonized saints. These were St. Ethelburga, queen of Edwin, the Bretwalda; St. Eadburga, the successor of St. Mildreda, the abbess of Menstrey, in Thanet; St. Eanswita, abbess of a convent at Folkstone; SS. Ethelred and Ethelbert, two youthful brothers, whose holy lives and violent death have procured for them the title of martyrs; St. Ermenburga, who married a son of King Penda, and became the mother of four saints, Mervin, Milburga, Mildreda, and Milgitha; St. Ermenilda, who became the queen of Wulfheri the Mercian; and St. Ercongotha, who entered a French convent, which was illustrious even before her admission, for many English saints of noble and royal blood.*

* See Fragment of the Geneal. of the Kings of Kent in Boll. Oct. tom. viii. between pp. 90 and 91. See also the "Narration of the Saints who repose in the Land of the English in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ," in the Boll. ib. p. 101.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PILGRIMAGES OF ST. BENNET BISCOP—HIS MONASTERY AT WEARMOUTH—INTRODUCES GLASS-BLOWING AND OTHER ARTS—OBTAINS A TEACHER OF THE ROMAN CHANT—HIS PICTURES, AS DESCRIBED BY VENERABLE BEDE—THE MONASTERY AT JARROW—ST. BENNET'S LAST PILGRIMAGE—DESOLATE CONDITION OF THE TWO MONASTERIES FROM THE VISITATION OF PESTILENCE—THE LAST MOMENTS OF SIGFRID AND ST. BENNET—CEOLFRID'S ADMINISTRATION—HIS DEPARTURE AND DEATH.

AMONG those practices that had their birth in the fervour of the newly converted people, two were particularly striking: one was the crowd of pilgrims that thronged, year after year, to the tombs of the Apostles at Rome; and the other was the multitude of persons of every class that embraced the monastic life.* St. Wilfrid and St. Bennet Biscop were apparently the first Northumbrians that made a pilgrimage to Rome. When they began their journey, Penda, the destroyer of Oswald and other kings, seems to have been still living, still threatening the North and checking its conversion. These pilgrimages, then, were coeval with the first conversion of the country.

The life of St. Bennet Biscop was almost a continued pilgrimage. He was one of King Oswio's thanes; and at the age of twenty-five, says St. Bede, "he left home, relations, and country, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's sake, that he might receive a hundredfold, and possess eternal life; he refused to be in the bonds of carnal nuptials, in order that in the kingdom of

* "His temporibus multi Anglorum, nobiles et ignobiles, viri et feminae, duces et privati, divini amoris instinctu de Britannia Romam venire consueverant; inter quos etiam reverendissimus abbas meus Ceolfridus, annos natus LXXIV.," &c.—St. Bede, de Sex Ætat. an. 720.

Heaven he might be able to follow the Lamb that is resplendent with the glory of virginity.”*

Leaving his country, therefore, he began his first pilgrimage in company with St. Wilfrid. Having made a second pilgrimage, he remained some months at Rome, and then for two years in a monastery on the isle of Lerins, or St. Honorat, in the South of France.† When the two years had expired, “being once more overcome with the love of the blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, he resolved to travel back to the city which is made sacred by his body.”‡ Having, in obedience to the Pope, returned to England with Archbishop Theodore, he was no sooner freed from the care of St. Peter’s monastery at Canterbury, than he began a fourth pilgrimage, though only the third if reckoned from Britain. Returning to Northumbria, he narrated to King Ecgfrid his travels and studies; and showed him the many copies of the sacred Scriptures, and the many relics of the blessed apostles and martyrs, which he had brought. The king was so delighted, that he immediately gave him, out of his own possessions, seventy families or hides of land.§ This land was near the sea, on the left or northern bank of the river Wear. On this spot St. Bennet “built a monastery, in honour of the most blessed Peter, the prince of the Apostles.” ||

About a year after laying the foundations, St. Bennet went to Gaul, to his friend the Abbot Torthelm, and brought over masons to build a stone church in the style of the Romans, “a style,” remarks his saintly biographer, “which he always loved.” The church being nearly finished, he sent to Gaul for glass-blowers, there being as yet none in Britain. The men

* St. Bede’s Life of St. Ben. sect. 1.

† About thirty miles to the north-east of the Isles of Hieres.

‡ St. Bede’s Life of St. Ben. sect. 2.

§ “At first of fifty families, which was afterwards augmented,” &c.—(Hist. Abb. Gyrv. Auct. Anon. sect. 7.) The family, or hide of land, was supposed to be as much as could be cultivated by a single plough in one year.

|| St. Bede’s Life of St. Ben. sect. 1.

that came to lend their services, not only put windows into the church and the rooms and porticos connected with it, but taught the English the secrets of their craft (A.D. 676).

When St. Bennet had purchased in Gaul vestments and sacred vessels, he found that for all other supplies he must turn to Rome. He had need of ornaments, of "pictures deservedly worthy of veneration,"* of books, of a teacher of church singing, and of a confirmation of the privileges of his monastery. For these purposes, accompanied by his friend Ceolfred, who was afterwards his successor, he undertook a fifth pilgrimage to the Holy See.

It was this very time that St. Wilfrid was making his appeal to Rome. Having resolved to send a legate to England, Agatho seems to have been guided in his choice by the request of St. Bennet: John, the appointed legate, the archcantor of St. Peter's, was one who would not think it beneath him to teach the monks of Wearmouth the Roman chant. This he did most zealously for a whole year, both by vocal practice and by writing. When his object became generally known, great numbers of those that were skilled in singing, thronged to hear him. Others he visited, for the same purpose, in their own localities. When a twelvemonth had thus passed, he returned to Rome, bearing with him the decrees of the Council of Hatfield.†

While John was thus engaged, St. Bennet was no doubt occupied with arranging in the monastic library, his "countless store of books of every kind." The depositing of the "abundant grace of relics" must have cost some time; but it is upon the setting up of the pictures that St. Bede most dilates: "The

* Ib. sect. 5 and 6; St. Bede's Hist. l. iv. c. 18; Hist. Abb. Gyr. sect. 7, 8, 9, and 10. "Romam ire disposuit, ut librorum copiam sanctorum, reliquiarum beatorum martyrum, memoriam dulcem historiarum canonicarum, picturam merito venerandam," &c. (s. 9).

† St. Bede, l. iv. c. 17 and 18.

"Bella Maro resonet," &c.

"Porta Maria Dei," &c.

picture, namely, of the Blessed Mother of God and ever a Virgin, Mary, as well as of the twelve Apostles, with which he surrounded the space over the arch of the sanctuary in the same church; the pictures of the Gospel history with which he decorated the south wall of the church; the pictures of the Visions of the Apocalypse of St. John, with which in a similar manner he adorned the north wall; so that all persons that entered the church, even the illiterate, wherever they turned, would either always behold the amiable countenance of Christ and His saints, though only imaged forth; or would recollect with a more watchful attention the grace of the Lord's Incarnation; or would remember the more strictly to examine themselves, from having in some manner before their eyes the terrors of the Last Judgment."*

Admiring what had been done at Wearmouth, Ecgfrid made St. Bennet a grant of land on the right bank of the Tyne, afterwards known as Jarrow. Here was built the monastery of St. Paul's, Ceolfrid being appointed its abbot; and again St. Bennet, for the sixth time (the fifth from Britain), journeyed forth to Rome. Returning, as usual, with paintings, books, and other treasures, he found that a fearful pestilence had visited the country. In the monastery of St. Paul's, at Jarrow, of all those that could recite the Divine office, Ceolfrid and a little boy "brought up by himself" (supposed to be St. Bede), were the only survivors. The monastery of Wearmouth, at the same time, had lost its abbot and many of its monks. Ceolfrid of Jarrow, and those monks that still survived at Wearmouth, had chosen for the new abbot, Sigfrid, a deacon, a man well versed in the Scriptures, and of wonderful abstinence; although, "for the preservation of the virtues of the soul," says St. Bede, "not a little weighed down by infirmity of body; labouring under an afflicting and irremediable disease of the lungs."†

* St. Bede, *Vita Sti. Bened.* sect. 6.

† *Hist. Abb. Gyrv.* sect. 11—16. St. Bede, *Vita Sti. Bened.*

Returning to this unexpected scene of desolation, and endeavouring to retrieve matters, St. Bennet himself was seized with a lingering illness, which confined him to his pallet for three years. There, giving thanks to God, he beguiled the weary hours with listening to the history of Job and other passages of the Scriptures, or with joining, as well as he could with a few of the monks, in the chanting of the Divine office. He requested the brethren to take care of the library, and to keep it entire. He reminded them that he had selected the practices which formed their code of rules, from what he had thought most excellent in seventeen different monasteries; and he besought them, therefore, again and again, not to consider them as his, but to observe them faithfully. He entreated them not to choose an abbot on account of his birth, nor from

sect. 7—9. Some of St. Bede's chief materials for the life of St. Bennet, here quoted, were derived from the work quoted before it, the History of the Abbots of Jarrow. This history not only mentions the "little boy," but states that he became a priest well known for his praiseworthy life, graced "both by writing and discourse." St. Bede then, having this history before him, must have known who the little boy was: must have been either that little boy himself, or a contemporary of his. St. Bede, when only seven years of age, was confided to the care of St. Bennet and Ceolfrid, as he himself tells us (*Hist. l. v. ad fin.*), and spent the whole of his life in meditating on the Scriptures, in the observance of the rule, and "in the daily care of singing in the church," and in studying, teaching, and writing. This account seems to point him out as the little boy. Two boys are not mentioned; yet St. Bede, being in his fifty-ninth year when he finished his history, must have been several years under Ceolfrid's care when the pestilence fell upon the monastery. He must have learned something of church song by that time, since, from the time of his being placed under Ceolfrid's care, singing was one of his constant occupations. When to this we add the eloquent silence of St. Bede, in omitting the passage in the History of the Abbots of Jarrow, which referred with praise to that little boy's subsequent career; and when, again, it is remembered that no other contemporary monk of Jarrow is mentioned by St. Bede, or could in any way fall under the description of the anonymous author, as being famed both for discourse (probably teaching) and for writing, the strong probability grows into something like a moral certainty, that that child whose single voice alone responded to the chant of Ceolfrid over his dead brethren, was no other than the Venerable Father of English Ecclesiastical History.

other places ; but, according to the rule of St. Benedict, the abbot of old, and according to the tenor of their charter of privileges, to choose a learned and virtuous man from their own community, and to cause him to be confirmed as abbot by the usual episcopal blessing.

Sigfrid was now drawing near his end, no less than St. Bennet. They expressed a mutual desire to see one another again before they left the body ; and, accordingly, Sigfrid was carried on a bier to the cell of the dying pilgrim, and there laid by his side, with his head on the same pillow. Neither had strength enough to move. The brotherhood stood around in tears. The object of this sorrowful meeting was soon made known : the dying abbots wished to surrender a trust which they could no longer administer. With the unanimous consent of the brethren, St. Bennet appointed Ceolfrid abbot of both monasteries. The monks departed. Sigfrid was borne back to his lowly couch. Nor till two months had passed was he released from his sufferings. Four months more elapsed before St. Bennet was to pass to his crown. The night of his going forth at last arrived. Bitter and loud blew the wintry blast. Mingling with its roar rose the chant of the brethren, as they solaced with God their grief for their coming loss. A more slender strain arose in the chamber of the dying saint. There the voice of a single priest was heard : it breathed the consoling words of the Gospel. Every night those precious words distilled balm into the dying one's soul. Now the words cease, a procession steals calmly in, and " the sacrament of the Lord's body and blood is given as a viaticum, since the hour of death is impending ; and so that holy soul, purified and tested by the prolonged flames of happy inflictions, quits the earthly furnace of the flesh, and, being set free, wings its way to the glory of heavenly bliss."

Ceolfrid proved a worthy successor of so great a man. He was very sparing in food, and homely in dress. Full of penetration and vigour, and burning

with the love and fear of God, this abbot was zealous in keeping and teaching the rule, and for the duties of prayer and psalmody; was kind to the poor, and generous to all; and whilst he was severe to the hardened, was mild to the repenting, sinner. To the churches of the Blessed Mother of God and of SS. Peter and Paul, which had been erected in the two monasteries, he added many chapels. He collected, likewise, vestments and many additional vases for the church or altar.

He doubled the number and value of the books in the library. To these he added a Bible of the ancient version, which he himself had brought from Rome. He caused three entire copies of the new, or St. Jerome's version, to be written out, a work of enormous labour. Two of these he placed in the churches of his monasteries, so that any one could consult them. As every letter would have to be made by the hand, a well-written copy of all the books of the Bible must have been extremely valuable. Ceolfrid, therefore, put aside a third copy, to be offered on his next pilgrimage to Rome, "as a gift to Blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles."

He had now ruled both monasteries nearly eight-and-twenty years, and his only desire on this side of the grave was to surrender his office to a more youthful ruler, and then, in unrestrained prayer, near the thresholds of the apostles, to watch for the dawn of eternal life.* He requested the brethren to choose an abbot, as the rule of St. Benedict required. They consented, with many tears. He then fixed the third day after for his departure, but still, as much as possible, kept secret his determination; for he feared that either death might come upon him before he could reach Rome, or that his many friends amongst the great might endeavour to detain him, or might make him a present of money (which he always, in some form or other, took care to return), whilst now

* St. Bede, Vita Sti. Bened. sect. 10—16. Hist. Abb. Gyrv. sect. 19, 20.

he himself would have no opportunity to make an equal gift.

On Thursday, the 4th of June, therefore, mass was sung at the first dawn in "the church of the Blessed Mother of God and ever a Virgin, Mary," and all present went to communion. The whole body of the monks then assembled in the church of St. Peter, where Ceolfrid, standing upon the steps, put incense into the thurible, and holding the latter in his hands, began to give the kiss of peace, until his own grief, as well as that of the monks, forced them to discontinue the ceremony. They then went out in procession to the oratory of St. Lawrence the Martyr, in the monks' dormitory. As they moved towards it, they chanted as their antiphon the words of the prophet: "The way of the just has been made straight, and the journey of the saints has been prepared, and walking from virtue to virtue." Then began the "Sixty-sixth" Psalm: "Deus misereatur nobis, et benedicat nos." From time to time the cry of sorrow was heard in the midst of the chant, and then again was drowned in the swell of human voices. Arriving at the oratory, Ceolfrid offered incense, and made an exhortation to unity and brotherly love; and again the procession moved on, and again the antiphon and psalm resounded. They now passed the monastic buildings, and began to approach the bank of the Wear. A vessel was upon the waters, awaiting Ceolfrid's arrival. The latter turned at the sight to give the community once more the last farewell, and the kiss of peace. Again and again the singing wavered and ceased, and sobs alone were heard. Ceolfrid could but briefly exhort them to charity and the observance of their rule, and then hurried on board. He took his seat on the prow. His deacons sat by his side, one holding a golden cross, and the other lighted tapers. As the ship glided towards the opposite bank, Ceolfrid looked back upon his sorrowing brotherhood. He could no longer restrain his tears and sobs: "Christ, have mercy on that assembly," he repeatedly exclaimed;

“ Lord Almighty protect that cohort. But most truly do I know that I have found none better than they, or more prompt in obedience. Christ, God, defend them.” The time of final departure was come: the ship had reached the opposite bank. Ceolfrid “adores the cross,” and, mounting his horse, continues his journey. He died, as he had feared, before he could reach Rome.*

* Hist. Abb. Gyr. sect. 23—28; St. Bede, Vita Sti. Ceolfr. sect. 15—18.

CHAPTER XIV.

IMMA, THE THANE'S, CAPTIVITY—THE STORY OF HIS CHAINS—
CÆDMON'S GIFT OF SACRED MINSTRELSY—THE PENANCE OF
ADAMNAN—THE WARNING AND CHASTISEMENT OF COLDINGHAM
MONASTERY.

WHILST men were thus from an equal love of penance devoting themselves to God, whether in pilgrimage or in the cloister, circumstances of wonderful character occurred, which stimulated the new Christians to greater fervour. Some of these, says Venerable Bede, "I thought should by no means be passed over in silence." As, indeed, they bear the stamp of genuineness, and had great influence on the age, whether they be now received or rejected; their total omission would destroy a link in the testimony of the facts and manners of the time.

The kings of Mercia and Northumbria were still rivals. They were brothers-in-law, indeed; but yet their rivalry increased until it became open enmity. A little before the Council of Hatfield, their armies had encountered on the banks of the Trent. It was in this battle that Ælfwini, the brother of Ecgfrid of Northumbria, was slain.

Amongst those that were left for dead at the close of the battle, was a young Northumbrian thane called Imma. The whole night he lay senseless among the heaps of the dead. Coming to himself, he bound up his wounds as well as he could. Then, after resting awhile, he got up on his feet, and contrived to move a short distance in search of his friends. Being observed by the men of one of the Mercian counts, he was seized and carried before their master. Fearing to acknowledge his rank, he said he was only a poor countryman, and that, to earn a living for himself and his wife, he

had come with his fellows to sell provisions to the soldiers. The count ordered him to be taken care of.

When, however, his wounds began to heal, he was always bound at night, to prevent his escape. Always, however, very soon after his keepers had left him, his chains fell off. The count, at last, asked him how it was, and whether he carried about him the charm called "loosening letters, such as fable told of." He replied that he knew nothing of such arts: but that he had a brother in his part of the country who was a priest; and who, he well knew, thought that he was slain, and frequently said mass for him; and, he added, "if now I were in another life, there my soul would be freed from punishment by his intercessions."

From his speech and general appearance it had long before this been suspected that he was not what he called himself. One day the count took him apart, and promised to do him no harm if he would say who he was. He told him he was one of Ecgfrid's thanes. "You indeed deserve to die," remarked the count, "because all my brothers and relations were killed in that battle. However, not to break my plighted word, I will not slay you."

He therefore sent him to London, and sold him as a slave to some Frisian merchant. Still his chains fell off as before. His new master tried many different kinds; but all alike relinquished their hold. He therefore exacted an oath from his captive that he would send him his ransom; and then set him free. Imma obtained the money from the king of Kent. Returning home, he narrated to his brother Tunna, who was abbot of Tunnacæstir,* all that had happened. The abbot, it appeared, had heard that Imma was

* If St. Bede's statement be correct, that Tunnacæstir was so called from the abbot's name, it would seem that the Saxons had adopted the Roman termination of *castrum*, then so common in the names of towns; and added it as a termination to the names of places quite new. If so, we must abandon the opinion now generally held, that such a termination is indisputable evidence of the town having been founded by the Romans.

slain, had gone to the field of battle, and, having taken to his monastery and buried a corpse which he thought was that of his brother, had frequently said mass for his soul's deliverance. The very time in which the chains mostly fell off, was the third hour, that at which the mass was usually celebrated.

"And," adds St. Bede, "many, hearing these things from the aforesaid man, were inflamed in faith and pious devotion to pray, or give alms, or offer to the Lord the victim of the sacred oblation, for the deliverance of their friends who have passed from the world: for they perceived that the health-giving sacrifice was available to the everlasting deliverance both of soul and body. This account some of those persons narrated to me, who heard it from the very man to whom it happened. Wherefore, since I have ascertained it by undoubted authority, I have without hesitation believed that it ought to be inserted in my Ecclesiastical History."*

Another circumstance, scarcely less remarkable, is the manner in which Caedmon a cowherd, received, at an advanced age, the power of making poetry. It was a custom at festal times for the harp to be passed round the table; each one singing, and, it would seem, playing also in turn. As, however, Caedmon had never learned to sing, it often happened, when he saw the harp coming near him, that he rose in the middle of dinner and went home. Once, when he had thus left, and had gone to the cowsheds, it being his turn to watch there that night, and afterwards had sunk into a slumber, he saw in a dream some one standing by him, saluting him and asking him to sing. He replied that he could not, and for that reason had left the feast. Being pressed, he asked what he was to sing. "Sing," was the answer, "the beginning of the Creation." He tried, accordingly, and found no difficulty: "Now must we praise the Maker of the realm of heaven; the might of the Creator and His plan: the deeds of the Father of glory. How He, the Eternal

* St. Bede, l. iv. c. 22: "Ad offerendas victimas," &c.

God, is Author of all wonders, who, Guardian Almighty of the human race, created for the sons of men, first, as a lofty roof, the heavens, and then the earth." This, at first, might have appeared but an unpleasant reminiscence of his failure at the feast. When, however, he poured out so noble a strain for his first essay, and still more when he awoke and repeated every word, and added others worthy of their subject, it was evidently something more than a dream. The steward, under whose orders Caedmon worked, led him to the abbess, St. Hilda, in one of whose farms the new poet seems to have been employed. A number of learned men assembled, and having heard his account of the dream, and listened to his poetry, they came to the unanimous conclusion that he had received this power as a special grace from Heaven. For some time after, they used to tell him some piece of sacred history, or some point of doctrine; and the next morning, he invariably returned with it embodied in excellent verse.

St. Hilda induced him to consecrate his talent to God in the monastic state. There living in great humility and obedience, he infused into "the sweetest verse" the whole tenor of Sacred History and the chief points of Christian Doctrine. His poetry contained nothing frivolous: it breathed into its hearers hatred of sin and the love and practice of good works. Having foretold his approaching end, he died in cheerful tranquillity, fortified with the "celestial viaticum," and the "sign of the holy cross."*

In the midst of the mercies which were thus in many ways showered upon the nation, we are not to suppose that the enemy had no opportunity of sowing tares amongst the good grain; or that men, when once enlightened, never yielded to their passions. The monastery of Coludi, or Coldingham, gave too striking a proof of the contrary. This monastery was situated near the coast, in what is now called the county of Berwick. The adjoining promontory of

* St. Bede, l. iv. c. 24.

St. Abb's Head is so called from one of the earliest abbesses of this house. Like the monastery of Eel-Isle or Ely; and the monastery of St. Hilda, at Whitby, that at Coldingham consisted of two distinct houses, one for men and the other for women. Although the abbess had the control of both, she could not enter the precincts of the monks, much less could they enter those of the nuns. There was as much separation as between any two adjoining houses in any of our towns.

In the house of the men at Coldingham, there happened to be a devout monk of Irish descent, named Adamnan. In his youth, he had fallen into a grievous sin. Struck with the fear of the Great Judge, he went to confession. He was told that a deep wound required a powerful remedy; that to obtain mercy he would have to persevere in "fasts, psalms, and prayers." He answered that he was ready to pray the whole night, and fast the whole week. The confessor told him that it was an arduous task to go without food for seven days; but that he should do so for two or three days together, until they met again. The young man, accordingly, never ate or drank except on Thursdays and Sundays. A sudden emergency meantime called the confessor to Ireland, where he died. Adamnan, however, persevered in his penance; and what he began in fear, he continued in love, and in the hope of everlasting reward.

When he was now in advanced years, returning with one of the monks from a short journey, and approaching the monastery, his face became sad and his eyes were suffused with tears. His companion asked him why he wept. He replied: "All these buildings which you see, both public and private, will very soon be burnt to ashes." Adamnan's companion disclosed to Æbba what he had heard. She asked Adamnan how he knew. In answer to her questions, he gave the following narration: "A little while ago, while spending the night in vigils and psalms, I suddenly beheld standing by me a man whose face was

unknown to me. As I was struck with terror from his appearance, he told me not to fear, and speaking with a sort of familiar expression, he said, 'You have done well, you who have chosen to persevere in watching and prayer, rather than to indulge in sleep in this nocturnal season of repose.' 'I am well aware,' I said, 'that it is very necessary for me to persevere in salutary watchings, and earnestly to supplicate the Lord for my sins.' 'You speak truly,' he answered, 'because it is necessary both for you and for many to redeem their sins by good works, and when they cease from their labours for temporal things, then to labour with greater freedom, in their yearning for the eternal riches. And yet very few do this. Indeed, I have just been observing the cells as well as the beds of each person, examining, in order, the whole monastery, and I have found no one but you occupied with the health of his soul; but all without exception, both men and women, either torpid in sluggish sleep, or wakeful for sin. For the small houses which were made for prayer or reading, are now become the chambers of feasting, drinking, conversation, and other enticements. Virgins, likewise, dedicated to God, contemning the reverence due to their calling, employ the whole of their leisure time in weaving the finer sort of dress, with which they may, to the peril of their state of life, adorn themselves like brides, or win the friendship of men from without. Deservedly, therefore, a severe vengeance from Heaven in raging flames, is prepared for this place and its inhabitants.' "

When Adamnan had finished this account, the abbess asked why he had not told her before? He said, he feared that it would afflict her too much, and that she had this consolation, that it would not happen until after her death.

When this was made known to the community, they returned at once to a life more suitable to their vows. Soon, however, they forgot their terrors, and when the abbess died, they became even worse than

before. Suddenly, while they were saying, "Peace and security," the avenging flames broke out, and the whole place was destroyed. "The most reverend priest," Ædgils, one of its monks, sought a home in the monastery of Jarrow, where Venerable Bede was professed. There he lived many years, and there, at last, he died. From his lips it was that the Father of English Church History learned the relaxation of holy life at Coldingham, and the fulfilment of the threat of punishment.*

* St. Bede, l. iv. c. 25.

CHAPTER XV.

ST. CUTHBERT—HIS MISSIONARY LABOURS NEAR MAILROS ABBEY—BECOMES BISHOP OF LINDISFARNE—HIS DYING EXHORTATION—HIS PROPHECY OF THE DEATH OF ECGFRID OF NORTHUMBRIA—ST. THEODORE'S ATONEMENT TO ST. WILFRID—HIS DEATH—ST. WILFRID'S RESTORATION TO THE SEE OF YORK—SYNOD AT ONE-STRETFIELD—ST. WILFRID SUMS UP HIS SERVICES TO THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND, AND APPEALS A SECOND TIME TO ROME—DECISION IN HIS FAVOUR—HIS VISION OF ST. MICHAEL—HIS HONOURABLE RECEPTION IN KENT AND MERCIA—KING ALFRID'S OBSTINACY AND SUDDEN DEATH—THE SYNOD ON THE RIVER NIDD—ST. WILFRID RESTORED—BECCANCEL'D—DEATH OF ST. WILFRID—HIS CONTEMPORARIES—ST. ERCONWALD FOUNDS THE MONASTERIES OF CHERTSEY AND BARKING—ST. ECGWIN'S PENITENTIAL JOURNEY TO ROME—FOUNDS THE ABBEY OF EVESHAM, AND, RESIGNING THE SEE OF WORCESTER, BECOMES ITS FIRST ABBOT.

AMONGST the holy bishops whom God had raised in the North in the absence of St. Wilfrid, none was more remarkable than St. Cuthbert, the bishop of Lindisfarne. In all simplicity and fervour, he had given his heart to God from his earliest years, and his Heavenly Father poured upon him in return the most extraordinary gifts, and, amongst the rest, that power of prophesying and working miracles, which has obtained for him the name of the *Thaumaturgus* of England.

When but a boy, he was not only innocent and devoted to prayer, but was already famous for miracles. Scarcely had he reached the years of manhood, when he presented himself as a postulant at the gates of Mailros Abbey. The abbot, St. Eata, whom St. Bede repeatedly styles the "meekest of men," was absent, but the holy prior Boisil, seeing him, exclaimed, in a prophetic spirit, "Behold a servant of God ; behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile."*

* St. Bede, *Vita Sti. Cuthb.* c. 1—6. No writer at the present

When he had been a monk (at Mailros and Ripon, and then again at Mailros) about ten years, the Great Pestilence fell upon the valley and mountains of the Tweed. Struck with terror, the people, instead of doing penance, began to try the spells and incantations of their half-forgotten paganism. This, and their sinful lives, excited the zeal of St. Cuthbert. Quitting his monastery from time to time, he journeyed on foot amongst the wildest recesses of the hills, preaching and administering the sacraments with an eloquence and sweetness that won the hearts of his hearers. Wondering at the angelical light that beamed upon his countenance, and believing that he was already acquainted with the secrets of consciences, the inhabitants had no difficulty in laying open their sins; and, adds St. Bede, they "cleansed away what they had confessed, by fruits worthy of penance." To complete their conversion by solid instruction was his next object, and, to accomplish this, he often spent amongst them a week at a time, and sometimes an entire month, before he returned to his monastery.

When he had thus laboured for many years, he was transferred, by St. Eata, to the monastery of Lindisfarne. In course of time he was made prior, but afterwards resigned that office, and retired to the solitude of the isle of Farne. Whilst living there as a hermit, he was chosen bishop of Lindisfarne, in a synod held by St. Theodore at Twyford, or the Double Ford, on the river Alne. His prayers and tears were alike unheeded: when messengers and letters had failed to draw him from his rude hermitage, King Ecgfrid and several bishops left the council, and, sailing to Farne, compelled him to obey, and to receive at York, on the following Easter,

day takes greater pains to prove his facts or figures than St. Bede does to guarantee the truthfulness of his account of St. Cuthbert's wonderful life. He continually refers to living witnesses; and when he had completed the work, he still submitted it for revision, as he tells us in his preface, to those visitors of his monastery who had been intimate with St. Cuthbert.

episcopal consecration.* His conduct in this new dignity may be easily surmised, from his zealous labours when a monk of Mailros. He contrived, however, in less than two years, to resign his see, and withdrew once more to Farne Island, being attended only by the devout Herefrid, the abbot of Lindisfarne. Soon after, he was seized with his last illness, and, having received the last sacraments, and “the communion of the body and blood of the Lord,” he passed from a world which he had never loved, but always feared. It was his dying admonition to the monks to cherish mutual peace and charity, and to receive with all humility and kindness other servants of Christ who might apply for hospitality. “But with those,” he added, “who break the peace of Catholic unity, either by not observing Easter aright, or by their evil lives, hold no communion. Rather than share in the iniquity of schismatics, take up my bones from the tomb, and go forth as wanderers wherever God may conduct you.”

Not very long before his death, he had foretold to the royal abbess, St. Elfleda, the untimely fate of her brother Ecgfrid of Northumbria, the persecutor of St. Wilfrid. At the time which he had thus foretold, he happened to be at Carlisle, and the citizens were showing him their city walls and a Roman fountain wondrously built, when he was suddenly troubled in spirit, and, leaning upon his staff, his eyes now cast upon the earth, now raised to heaven, with a deep groan he softly exclaimed, “Now, perchance, is the crisis of the battle.” A priest, who overheard him, asked how he knew. Turning the conversation by a remark upon the weather, the holy bishop went to the queen, and, having obtained a private audience, said to her, “As you may not ride in your carriage to-morrow, it being Sunday, hasten, at daybreak on

* According to a charter, the authenticity of which Kemble doubts, Ecgfrid gave to St. Cuthbert vast possessions, and amongst the rest, the city of Carlisle and a circuit of fifteen miles of land.—Cod. Diplom. i. No. 25.

Monday, with all speed, to the royal city, for fear the king may have been slain. For my part, I have to go and consecrate a church to-morrow, in a neighbouring monastery; but as soon as the dedication is finished, I will follow you." On the Monday a soldier, fleeing from the enemy, brought word to the startled Northumbrians of the total overthrow of the royal army, and the death of Ecgfrid, at the very day and hour when St. Cuthbert was standing by the Roman fountain.* This disaster, combined with other circumstances, prepared the way for the return of St. Wilfrid from his prolonged banishment. This great bishop had all this time been engrossed with the care of his new converts in Sussex and the Isle of Wight. Amongst those whom he had instructed, was the once ferocious Cædwalla, the king of Wessex. This able prince was not satisfied until he had made St. Wilfrid his chief counsellor. Whilst thus engaged, the latter received a message, full of humility and friendship, from St. Theodore of Canterbury. St. Theodore had long felt a misgiving in regard to his conduct towards St. Wilfrid; and had therefore, at length, sent for him. On his arrival, he confessed to him his fault, in presence of Erconwald, the saintly bishop of London; received St. Wilfrid's ready forgiveness; and did his utmost, by writing to all concerned, to effect his restoration. The aged archbishop did not long survive this noble act of atonement. He left a name somewhat tarnished, indeed, by what he acknowledged to be his injustice to St. Wilfrid, yet most illustrious for general sanctity of life and extraordinary learning. So great was his reputation, that a few years before his death, Pope Agatho, we are told, deferred the time for opening the Sixth General Council, merely on account of the absence of several expected prelates, and particularly of the "archbishop and philosopher Theodore."† Ethelred, of Mercia, meantime, joyfully

* Vita Sti. Cuthberti, passim; Sti. Bed. Hist. lib. iv. c. 28; Sax. Chron. an. 684.

† Will. of Malm. De Gest. Pont. l. i. p. 196, ap. Sav.

restored to St. Wilfrid his property in Mercia, and to the end of his life remained his firm friend. Ecgfrid's brother, Alfrid, who was now ruling in Northumbria, obeyed the letter of the archbishop, and soon after, in conformity with the directions of Pope Agatho, restored St. Wilfrid to the see of York.*

Peace, however, was soon again disturbed. Those that held the possessions of which St. Wilfrid had been unjustly stripped, devised reasons for keeping them. The king's mind was gradually alienated; and as St. Wilfrid adhered firmly to what had been decreed, he was obliged to withdraw to Mercia. A synod of nearly all the bishops of Britain at length assembled at Onestrefield, but the only point perfectly clear was that the new archbishop of Canterbury was prejudiced against St. Wilfrid, and that the enemies of the latter longed to strip him of all his property. He was sitting in the midst of his abbots and priests, when a messenger came, in the name of the king and archbishop, to demand whether he would submit to the decision of the archbishop alone. He replied, that he must first be acquainted with the nature of that decision. The messenger, however, said that the archbishop required St. Wilfrid's written consent, and that then, and not till then, would he make known his decision.

Such a method was as unusual as it was uncanonical, and St. Wilfrid resolutely declined, adding, however, that he would cheerfully obey the archbishop's mandates in all things that were in accordance with the decrees of the holy Fathers and the canonical rules and definitions, and with the judgment of Pope Agatho and his successors. Seeing the fixed determination of his enemies, he addressed them in unshrinking terms, reminding them of his services to the English Church during an episcopate of nearly forty years; of his having introduced into Northumbria the right observance of Easter and form of the tonsure; of his having introduced the old primitive ecclesiastical chant, with

* Eddius, 41, 42, 43.

its double choir, and alternate singing; and of his having been the first to introduce into the North of England the religious life according to the rule of St. Benedict. "How," he continued, "shall I now utter against myself a hasty sentence of condemnation, without the consciousness of any fault? I confidently appeal to the Holy See. If any one of you presumes to strip me of my grade of dignity, let him accept the invitation which I now give him, and accompany me thither to judgment."

The king and the archbishop exclaimed, "Being now found guilty by us, let him be branded with condemnation, for preferring their judgment to ours." The king even threatened that he would employ force to compel him to promise submission. The other bishops, however, interposed, and the council broke up.*

St. Wilfrid was now about seventy years of age. Considering the difficulties of the journey to Rome, and the resources and pertinacity of his enemies, it might have appeared almost a matter of prudence to abandon the contest. Yet, where principles are at stake, and especially those that bear upon the living action of the Church, peace and quiet is only the pass-word of treachery and cowardice. St. Wilfrid had no hesitation. He toiled on. He reached the holy city. There he found his enemies awaiting him, but having lost nothing of his former energy, he lost no time in presenting his petition. The representatives of the archbishop then presented their chief accusation: he had "contemned the synodal judgments of Berthwald, the holy bishop of the church of Canterbury and of all Britain, who was sent out by this Apostolic See." St. Wilfrid, in reply, stated the simple facts, and covered them with confusion. They, however, felt confident of Alfrid's support, and struggled, at least, to save appearances. The ministers of the Holy See exerted themselves strenuously in no fewer than seventy sessions, yet four months elapsed before the entire

* See the proceedings at Rome, as inserted in Eddius (48—51).

question could be scrutinized and adjusted.* At last it was finished: St. Wilfrid was most fully and honourably acquitted. Now that the principle was vindicated, St. Wilfrid had no other desire than to remain and die under the shadow of the Holy See. The Pope, however, and the whole synod, which had been so long discussing the question, commanded him to return, in order to alleviate the grief of his subjects and to carry in person, to the kings and bishops, the apostolic decision. St. Wilfrid obeyed.

Returning through France, he was seized with illness. For four days and nights he lay senseless. Returning to consciousness, he called Acca, a priest, and afterwards bishop, and an intimate friend of St. Bede's, and thus addressed him: "I have just seen a fearful vision, which I wish you to hear and to keep secret, until I know the will of God in my regard. For some one glittering in a white dress stood by me, and said that he was Michael, the archangel; 'and for this am I sent,' he added, 'to recall you from death. For the Lord has given you life through the prayers and tears of your disciples and brethren, and through the intercession of his Blessed Mother, the ever Virgin Mary. Wherefore I tell you, that now indeed you will be healed of this sickness; but be ready, for after four years, returning I will visit you. Arriving in your own country, you will receive a very great portion of the possessions which were taken from you, and you will close your life in undisturbed peace.'" (A.D. 705.)†

St. Wilfrid, accordingly, recovered, and was soon on the coast of England. There Berthwald, archbishop of Canterbury, was awaiting his arrival, full of repentance. Ædilred, formerly king of Kent, but then an abbot, and Coinred, Ædilred's successor, all, as soon as they had read the Pope's letters, received

* Spelman assigns the year 701; but Mabillon proves that it must have been in the year 703.—See Acta SS. tom. iii.; Edd. Vita Sti. W. note to 44.

† St. Bede, l. 4, sect. 292; and l. v. sect. 420. Edd. 44, &c.

the saint with the greatest honour. Ethelred, of Mercia, who had now entered the monastic state, welcomed him with tears of joy, and, prostrate on the earth, promised obedience to every tittle in the Pope's letter, and to enforce its observance with all his strength. Not so Alfrid, of Northumbria: "I will never, for the sake of what you assert to be the letter of the Apostolic See, change what my predecessors and an archbishop, and afterwards we, with an archbishop sent by the Apostolic See, together with nearly all the bishops of the nation of Britain, have decided." Scarcely had he sent back this answer to St. Wilfrid, when he was struck with a mortal disease. With his dying breath, he lamented his sin against the bishop and the Holy See, and left an earnest injunction for his successor: "For the salvation of my soul, to enter into peace and concord with St. Wilfrid, the bishop."*

He was succeeded by Eadwulf. St. Wilfrid thought that now, at least, he might enter Northumbria. He accordingly went to Ripon, and despatched messengers to Eadwulf. A harsh greeting awaited them. "I swear by my salvation," was the king's answer, "unless he quits my kingdom within six days, every one of his companions that falls into my hands shall be put to death." In almost as short a time, the king himself was expelled, after a reign of only two months. Who will say the finger of God was not there?† Osred, a child eight years old, succeeded. In obedience to the commands of the Holy See, Berthwald, the archbishop of Canterbury and "of almost all Britain," now assembled a great council of the bishops, abbots, and princes of Northumbria on the eastern bank of the Nidd, one of the feeders of the Yorkshire Ouse. The archbishop read the Pope's letters, giving the bishops the option of making peace with St. Wilfrid for the salvation of their souls, or else of going all together to Rome, to abide a decision still more deliberate than the former. Every one

* Eddius, 44—51; and St. Bede, l. v. c. 8.

† Eddius, 51—58.

that refused to make the choice, whether priest or layman, was declared excommunicated.

Those bishops who had been put into St. Wilfrid's place, renewed the old objection: how could they change what "Theodore, an archbishop sent out by the Apostolic See," and the kings and bishops had decided upon. Here the Abbess Ælfleda, the daughter of King Alfrid, who had attended the death-bed of her father, made known his repentance and his "vow to God and St. Peter," that if life were given him, he would execute all the decisions of the Apostolic See with regard to St. Wilfrid.

When she had finished, Berectfrid, the highest nobleman in the kingdom, exclaimed, "It is the will of the king and his princes to obey in everything the mandates of the Apostolic See and the commands of King Alfrid. For so when beset in the city called Bebbanburg, we vowed we would do, and immediately after the vow, we were freed from our peril, and having chased away our enemies, obtained the kingdom."

The bishops then consulted apart. It was at length agreed to make peace with St. Wilfrid, and to restore to him the two monasteries of Ripon and Hexham, with all their revenues. St. Wilfrid would not however allow St. John of Beverley to be removed from the see of York. He himself, he said, was now too old and infirm for so extensive a diocese. As, however, the see of Hexham was vacant, he agreed to become its bishop. Thus, with joy and mutual congratulations and holy communion, harmony was completely restored.*

During the absence of St. Wilfrid in Mercia, before his last appeal, an important synod had been held at Beccanceld, which is perhaps Basschild, on the Canterbury side of Sittingbourne. In this synod, a charter was drawn up by the king of Kent, declaring that no layman should contravene the "institutes of our fore-

* Eddius, 58, usque ad finem; St. Bede, l. v. c. 2 and 4 (ad init.) and 19.

fathers, possessing himself of a church, nor of any of the things which belong to a church." And hence, "in the name of Almighty God and of his saints, we forbid to all kings our successors, and to ealdormen, and all laymen, any lordship whatever over the churches, and over all their possessions, which I or my elders of olden days have given as an everlasting inheritance, to the glory of Christ, and of our Lady St. Mary, and of the Holy Apostles. And observe that whenever it shall happen that a bishop, or an abbot, or an abbess, shall depart this life, let it be made known to the archbishop, and by his counsel and advice let such a one be chosen as shall be worthy." "It is the duty of kings to appoint earls and ealdormen, shire-reeves and judges; and of the archbishop to instruct and advise the community of God; and bishops, abbots, and abbesses, priests and deacons, to choose and appoint, and consecrate and establish, by good precepts and example, lest any of God's flock stray and be lost."*

Towards the end of the four years assigned him in the vision, St. Wilfrid withdrew to his monastery at Oundle, in Northamptonshire. Cudwald was then its abbot. There the saint breathed forth his soul in peace. The monks carried his body to his monastery at Ripon, and buried it to the south of the altar, in the church of St. Peter.† His epitaph, as recorded by St. Bede, mentions his having founded and adorned the church in which he was buried, and having "consecrated it in the glorious name of Peter, to whom Christ, the Ruler of the world, gave the keys of heaven." It adds, that he erected in it a lofty cross of bright metal; and deposited there, in a golden case, a copy of the four Gospels written in gold. It refers to his successful efforts to lead to the correct observance of Easter; to the numerous communities of

* Sax. Chron. A.D. 694, ap. Mon. Hist. Brit.

† St. Bede, l. v. c. 19. Alcuin thus speaks in praise of St. Wilfrid:—"Tempore nam micuit Wilfridus, episcopus ille, quem Deus omnipotens infudit luce superna.....Et celebri fama lato laudatur in orbe."—De Pont. et St. Ecc. Ebor. lines 578, 579, and 612.

monks which he had formed; and to his perils at home and abroad. It ends with the simple prayer:—

“Grant, Jesus, that the flock
Their shepherd’s path may tread.”*

Seldom has any country been blessed with so great a number of holy prelates as God raised up in England during the pontificate of St. Wilfrid. Besides the holy archbishop Theodore, there were, amongst many others, St. Chad, of Lichfield; St. Cuthbert, of Lindisfarne; St. John, of Beverley; St. Erconwald, of London; St. Aldhelm, of Sherburne, and St. Egwin, of Worcester. Some of these had already passed to their crown before St. Wilfrid. Their saintly deeds, long treasured up by their people, have now upon earth but few and very uncertain traces. St. Cuthbert, long the hermit of Farne, seems to have eclipsed all others in the splendour of his miracles. St. Aldhelm, the “prince” of early English poets, who loved to sing upon the harp the mysteries of religion to an unlettered but delighted audience, passed away in the same year as the undaunted bishop of York. John of Beverley, the bishop, during the latter part of St. Wilfrid’s troubles, first of Hexham, and then of York, was almost as famous for miracles as St. Cuthbert.† St. Erconwald, of the blood royal of East Anglia, abandoned his own country, and built and ruled the monastery of Chertsey, on the Surrey side of the Thames, as well as that of Barking, in Essex, for his sister St. Edilberga;‡ and finally became bishop of London. St. Egwin, like St. Erconwald, was of blood royal; and like him preferred the cloister to the

* St. Bede, l. v. c. 18.

† St. Bede mentions some remarkable ones which he had heard from persons who had lived with St. John, and especially from Abbot Berthun, who had been his deacon.—(Hist. lib. v. c. 2, &c.) In the circumstances attending one of these miracles, we find that the bishop watched over the education of young men, some destined for the cloister, and others for the world; and that this youthful band rode with him when he moved to and fro in his diocese.

‡ St. Bede, l. iv. c. 6.

palace. As a monk, he became a model of penance, until, at the request of both people and clergy, he was chosen and consecrated bishop of Worcester. He was the third who had filled that see, Bosa and Ostfort being his predecessors. Like most of his saintly contemporaries, the new bishop was not without the purifying trial of persecution. The illicit marriages and general depravity of a people yet reeking with the filth of paganism, excited his deepest commiseration. His glowing sermons, his untiring efforts, produced, for some time, no other effect than to draw upon his own head the opposition and hatred of the fickle world. Thrust out of his see, he journeyed to Rome as a poor penitent, bound voluntarily, we are told, in fetters, the key of which he had flung into the Avon.

Being honourably received at Rome, and being, at last, restored to his see, he ended his days in peace. Some time before his death, he was favoured, it is said, with a vision of the Mother of God. This is attested, not merely by the ancient, if not contemporary life, of the Bollandists; but, on the one hand, by a letter of Pope Constantine to the English bishops, requiring them to hold a synod at the place where the vision was said to have been seen; and, on the other, by the letter of the bishops, certifying that it was a vision sent by God. The Pope, in his letter, had declared the apparition to have been as certain as was the holiness of Bishop Ecgwin. If any doubt of the genuineness of these letters exist, Ecgwin's own account, brief as it is, is still extant, and amply confirms their general purport.

The vision was as follows: The site of the present town of Evesham was then part of a forest, dense with briars and underwood, but containing, it seems, a small and very ancient chapel. One day, Eoves, one of the bishop's herdsman, was making his way through one of the most tangled brakes, when he beheld, to his amazement, three virgins, whose beauty and glory was greater than that of earth or sun. One of the

three, whose loveliness far surpassed that of her companions, was holding a book in her hands, from which all three were singing heavenly canticles.

Unable to endure the brilliant light, and trembling and dumb with fear, the man went home, and told the bishop. The latter betook himself to prayer and fasting. Then, with three companions, he went barefooted to the place, and leaving the others at a little distance, entered the brake, and prostrating on the ground, besought the mercy of our Redeemer. As he arose from his prayer, he beheld the same vision of the three virgins. He thought, as he gazed, that the one whose beauty was so surpassing must needs be the Mother of God. As if encouraging the idea, she blessed him with a golden cross, which she now held along with the book. She then disappeared.

The servant of God had, in the midst of his late troubles, vowed to build a church. He now understood that it was to be on that spot, and to be dedicated to the Mother of God. He immediately laid the foundations, and soon completed the entire fabric of the Benedictine abbey of Ethom or Evesham. He himself afterwards resigned his see, and became the first abbot of the new monastery, and there died the death of the saints (A.D. 717).*

* See Ep. of Pope Constantine ap. Wilk. i. p. 71; and also in the Life of St. Ecg. ap. Boll. Jan. xi.; and Kemb. Cod. Dipl. tom. i. No. 64. The genuineness of the Pope's epistle has been denied. From what is stated, however, in the various documents produced by Kemble, the chief facts of the letter are strongly confirmed. In consequence of the unhesitating belief in those facts, great donations were made to the new monastery by Kenred, king of Mercia, and Offa, king of the East Angles, in the "Lateran Church of Our Saviour," in presence of Pope Constantine, St. Ecgwin himself, and an applauding multitude of "archbishops and bishops, princes and nobles," of the different Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.—Kem. i. No. 56—65.

CHAPTER XVI.

SOME ABATEMENT OF FERVOUR—ST. BEDE'S ADVICE—PRETENDED
ABBOTS AND MONASTERIES—THE LAST DAYS OF ST. BEDE.

THE public worship of idols was now seldom witnessed in any part of England. There was much to be done, however, before the bulk of the people could be thoroughly instructed. The cabins and hamlets of the peasantry were often cut off from the rest of the country, by swampy forests and rocky hills. In such localities it not unfrequently happened, that a bishop seldom appeared, for many years; and, consequently, that, if the population was not without the blessing of having a resident priest, still there was no one to give confirmation, "by the imposition of hands, by which the Holy Spirit is received;"* and what was equally deplorable, there was no one to give counsel, solace, or legitimate reproof, to the pastor himself. The latter knew, that if he were inclined to sleep at his post, he could do so with almost certain impunity.

In Northumbria, this drowsiness fell upon many. St. Bede, for instance, attributes the general neglect of frequent communion, to the want of zealous instruction. Writing in familiar but striking terms, to Egbert, archbishop of York, the Father of English History urges him to see that the people were carefully taught, "by what works especially they might please God; from what things, being sins, if they desire to please God, they were to abstain; with what sincerity of heart they ought to believe in God; with what devotion, entreating the Divine clemency, they

* "Antistes qui manus impositione baptizatos confirmet" (Ep. to Eg. sect. 7), "manus impositione, qua Spiritus Sanctus accipitur" (ib. sect. 8).

ought to pray; with how diligent a frequency they should hold it necessary to fortify themselves, and all that was theirs, by the sign of our Lord's Cross, against the continued ambuscades of the unclean spirits; how salutary for every class of Christians is the daily receiving of the body and blood of the Lord, which, you know, is the diligent practice of the Church of Christ throughout Italy, Gaul, Africa, Greece, and the whole of the East. This (I mean this kind of religious practice, and of sanctification devout to God) is, through the neglect of those that teach, so extremely remote from the ideas of almost all the laity of our province, that they who seem to be among the more religious do not dare to receive the communion of the most holy mysteries, except on the Nativity, the Epiphany, and Easter; although there are innumerable boys and girls, young men and maidens, and old persons of both sexes, who are innocent and chaste, and who, beyond all question, might partake of the heavenly mysteries every Sunday, as well as on the feasts of the holy Apostles and Martyrs, according to the practice which you yourself have seen in the holy Roman and Apostolic Church."*

To make instructions sink the deeper, the holy writer suggested that the people should be taught, if not the Latin tongue (the most effectual way), at

* Ep. to Egbert, sect. 15:—"Quam frequenti diligentia signacula se Dominicæ crucis, suaque omnia, adversum continuas immundorum spirituum insidias, necesse habeant munire; quam salutaris sit omni Christianorum generi quotidiana Dominici corporis ac sanguinis perceptio, juxta quod ecclesiam Christi per Italiam, Galliam, Africam, Græciam, ac totum Orientem, solerter agere nosti. Quod videlicet genus religionis ac Deo devotæ sanctificationis, tam longe a cunctis pene nostræ provinciæ laicis per incuriam docentium, quasi prope peregrinum, abest, ut hi qui inter religiosiores esse videntur, non nisi in Natali Domini, et Epiphania, et Pascha, sacrosanctis mysteriis communicare præsumant; cum sint innumeri innocentes et castissimæ conversationis pueri ac puellæ, juvenes et virgines, senes et anus, qui absque ullo scrupulo controversiæ, omni die Dominico, sive etiam in natalitiis sanctorum Apostolorum sive Martyrum, quomodo ipse in sancta Romana et Apostolica Ecclesia fieri vidisti, mysteriis cœlestibus communicare valeant."

least not only to say, but to sing carefully, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed.

That all parts of the diocese might be annually visited, and the people be everywhere instructed, St. Bede urged Egbert to ordain, and to take with him in his visitations, a considerable number of priests. These would be able to see all the little remote spots, which might otherwise be overlooked. To accomplish the same object still more effectually, St. Bede reminded him of St. Gregory's intention to make York an archiepiscopal see, with twelve suffragans; and advised him to reduce this idea to practice. For this, two things were indispensable: an endowment of land, and the "decrees of the Apostolic See." The latter could easily be obtained, were the former secured. Here was the difficulty. "By the heedlessness of preceding kings, and most foolish donations," scarcely a vacant spot could be found that was suitable for a bishop's see. During the last thirty years, three successive Northumbrian kings had been murdered.* Many of the nobles had profited by the troubles of the time to obtain most extravagant privileges. Seeing that the monasteries, amongst other immunities, were free from military service, they devised a scheme for securing these rights to their own families. They called themselves abbots, and their houses monasteries. They then formed a body of so-called monks, by enticing monks from their monasteries; or by giving shelter to some who had been expelled for disobedience; or when unable to find such wretched men, by causing some of their own followers to receive the tonsure and to promise them obedience. Having thus some slight appearance of a monastery, they blushed not to procure by money, a royal charter of privileges, such as were usually given to the genuine monasteries. Such charters not having the Pope's approbation, might, indeed, be repudiated by zealous bishops; but they secured that legal exemption which these chieftains so meanly coveted. Thus, there arose the unprecedented

* Will. of Malm. l. i. sect. 53.

spectacle of married men being nominally abbots, and of lands and houses being mischievously exempt from the service both of God and the state.

One nobleman succeeded another in the same course. The lands of the state had thus been swallowed up; the men who ought to have been foremost in war claimed exemption, for themselves and their numerous followers, from its duties and perils; and thus the whole country lay open to the first invader. Such a system proves both the weakness and corruption of the Northumbrian government. It was in one sense, therefore, a blessing that the Danes, a century later, were enabled to shatter and annihilate it. Another evil resulting from these "most foolish donations," was the difficulty already stated, of obtaining land for new sees. St. Bede suggested to the archbishop that strong remedies should be applied to so crying an evil: that a great council should, with joint consent of the king and bishops, make some of the monasteries episcopal sees; that the inmates of these monasteries should have the choice of the new bishop; and that the latter should rule both the diocese and the monastery. If the lands of the monastery were not sufficient both for the support of its inmates and the wants of the diocese, the deficiency was to be made good by lands taken, with the authority of a synod, from the possessions of the nominal monasteries.*

When Venerable Bede was writing to Egbert the above letter, he seems to have felt some presentiment that his days were now drawing to a close.† A little before Easter, A.D. 735, he was attacked with great difficulty of breathing. There being little pain, he gave his usual lessons, and continued all his other duties. Much of his spare time he gave to the chanting of

* Ep. Ven. B. ad Egb. sect. 9, 10, 12, 13, &c.

† For three centuries after St. Bede's death there is scarcely any contemporary history. Hence it is, even in the time of William of Malmesbury, that "little" was left "of the acts of the bishops" to testify "their zeal in the things of God."—(De Gest. Pon. l. i. p. 197.) The scanty notices of the Saxon Chronicle, and some epistles and occasional biographies, are the only surviving monuments.

psalms, or of some of those Anglo-Saxon poems that embodied portions of the Scriptures, a kind of literature in which he was deeply versed. He thanked God almost unceasingly, and with outstretched hands, for the infirmity which he was suffering. At one time, he sang, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" but repeated again and again, "God scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," as well as the saying of St. Ambrose; "I have not lived in such a manner as to be ashamed of having lived amongst you; nor, on the other hand, do I fear to die, since we have a good God." When towards the close of Easter-time, he sang the Antiphon, "O Rex Gloriæ," and come to the words, "leave us not orphans," his utterance was choked with tears. His scholars too were melted: "at one moment (wrote one of them afterwards) we read, at another we wept; indeed we always read with tears."

During his illness, St. Bede was occupied with two little translations of great utility; one consisted of extracts from St. Isidore's books of hymns;* the other was St. John's Gospel. On the Tuesday before the Ascension, he grew much worse, and his feet were swollen. His scholars wrote with haste that day; for he reminded them, more than once, that he knew not how long he had to live. The next morning at dawn they resumed their task, until it was time for them, according to custom (it being one of the Rogation-days), to go in procession with the relics of the saints. One, however, remained with the dying monk; and for some time continued writing. "Most dear master," he, at length, exclaimed, "one chapter is still wanting; do you think it would be troublesome to ask you any more questions?" "Not at all," said St. Bede, "write quickly." A little later, while his scholars were still writing, he sent for the priests of the monastery; and

* "Et de libris rotarum Ysodori episcopi excerptiones quasdam, dicens, 'Nolo ut discipuli mei mendacium legant, et in hoc post obitum meum sine fructu laborent.'" "Rotarum.....id est, cantuum seu hymnorum."—See Du Cange's Gloss.

distributing amongst them some little presents (spices, stoles,* and incense), begged them to be diligent in saying masses and prayer for him. They all wept; but they rejoiced with him when he told them that it was time to return to Him that created him, and that he desired “to be dissolved and to be with Christ.”

It was now evening, and the youth that was writing the last part of St. John’s Gospel, exclaimed, “One sentence, dear master, is not yet written.” “Write it quickly,” was the reply. After a pause, the boy said, “The sentence is now written.” “You have, indeed, spoken truly: it is finished.” Being laid, at his own request, on the floor of the cell opposite his little oratory, he chanted the Doxology, “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,” and immediately breathed forth his soul. It was past midnight, on the morning of the glorious feast of the Ascension, that he thus tranquilly passed to his everlasting reward.† “Precious in the sight of God is the death of his saints.”

* “Oraria” may mean either a stole or a handkerchief.—(See Du Cange’s Gloss.) It must, however, be observed, that it seems to have been used in the former sense by writers of the time of St. Bede. St. Bede himself thus uses it in his “Collect. et Flores” (“De Septem Ordinibus”):—“Quintum est orarium, quod quidam *stolam* vocant,” &c.—Ven. Bede, Op. tom. iii. p. 494, Col. 1688.

† See a letter written to Cuthwin by Cuthbert, one of St. Bede’s scholars who attended his master’s death-bed. It is inserted in Asser’s Annals, ap. Gale, i. p. 152. It is also in Sim. of Durh. l. i. c. 24.

CHAPTER XVII.

DEGENERACY OF NORTHUMBRIA AND MERCIA — ST. BONIFACE'S INDIGNATION—HIS LETTERS FOR A REFORMATION—SYNOD OF CLOVESHO—ITS DECREES—EGBERT OF YORK BECOMES ARCH-BISHOP—HIS LIBRARY—THE LIBRARIES OF CANTERBURY, GLASTONBURY, WEARMOUTH, AND HEXHAM—ÆLBERT'S ZEAL—ALCUIN AND CHARLEMAGNE—ARRIVAL OF LEGATES FROM THE HOLY SEE —SYNODS AND DECREES.

OUT in the busy world, different, indeed, was the scene, not only from the stillness and seclusion, but from the sanctity of the cloisters of Wearmouth. There, in the populous haunts of men, and especially in the palaces of princes and kings, the incessant struggle between fallen and regenerated nature was going fearfully against the latter. Osred, the king of Northumbria, though a mere youth, was the slave of impurity; and, by a just but terrible judgment, when as yet only nineteen years of age, he was suddenly attacked and murdered by his own kinsmen. Two of his murderers successively filled the throne; and, like their victim, perished successively by a violent death (A.D. 729). The good example and zealous efforts of Ceolwulf and Egbert or Eadbert, the two next kings, who both afterwards became monks, could not effectually stem the violence and immorality of the age.* Mercia was little better than Northumbria. Few of its princes escaped a violent death after the murder of Ethelbert, otherwise Ethelred, until neither avarice nor ambition could entice a single candidate to fill its blood-stained throne: for thirty years it thus remained without a ruler, the scoff and spoil of its

* Ceolwulf's acuteness, learning, and experience were such that St. Bede submitted to his correction the manuscript of his Ecclesiastical History (see his Prolog.).

neighbours (A.D. 796).^{*} Tidings of the degeneracy and vices of the English, spread throughout France, Italy, and Germany. It became a by-word of reproach in the mouths, both of pagans and Christians.[†] The profligacy of many of the English women who thronged the route of pilgrimage to Rome, was itself too lamentable a proof of the state of things in their own country.[‡]

St. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, was still living. He had triumphed over heresy and idolatry; had been made archbishop by the Holy See; and to confirm the triumphs of the Gospel, had procured from England a multitude of men skilled in writing and other learned arts. Many of these he established in Fulda, and other newly-founded monasteries. For this timely assistance he felt that he could best repay his country, not with flattery, but with advice regarding its grievous spiritual maladies. Filled with the spirit of true patriotism, and, therefore, yearning for the salvation of his countrymen, but filled with horror for their shameful sins, he assembled seven of his suffragans, all of English birth, and in the name of the whole synod, wrote letters burning with zeal to Ethelbald, the king of Mercia, and to Cuthbert, the archbishop of Canterbury.[§] The following is the substance, and occasionally the very wording of the letter to Ethelbald:—

“To the most dear lord King Ethelbald, Boniface, archbishop and ‘legate in Germany of the Roman Church,’ and Wera and Burgad, &c., his fellow-bishops, the salvation everlasting of love in Christ.

^{*} Will. of Malm. Gest. Reg. l. i. sect. 53 and 73; Ep. of St. Bon. ap. Will. of Malm.

[†] “Si enim gens Anglorum, sicut per istas provincias divulgatum est et nobis in Francia et in Italia impropert,” &c.—Ep. Bon. ad Ethelb. ap. Wilkins, vol. i. p. 87.

[‡] Ep. Bon. ad Cuthb. Ar. Cant. ap. Spelm. p. 241; or Wilk. i. p. 90.

[§] Compare the epistle of St. Boniface to the priest Heresfrid, in Wilk. p. 90; St. Willibald’s Life of St. Bon. ap. Pertz, tom. ii. p. 345; and the Annals of Fulda in Pertz.

“We confess before God and His holy angels, that we have rejoiced at the tidings of your prosperity and your alms-deeds, and your repression of theft, violence, and perjury. Yet one thing has afflicted us: you have not entered into lawful matrimony. ‘Had you done this—had you abstained from taking a wife on account of your fear and love of God, in this too we would rejoice, because it is not reprehensible, but on the contrary praiseworthy.’ If, however (which God forbid, though many say it is so), you refrain from lawful marriage to become the slave of lustful passions, you confound your glory before God and man. Still worse, you have made a monastery your chosen place for committing this wickedness: you have sinned with ‘holy nuns and virgins consecrated to God.’ If the man that commits adultery with the wife of his lord is worthy of vengeance, how much more he ‘who has stained with the putrefaction of his lust, the spouse of Christ, the Creator of heaven and earth.’ The very pagans, here in Old Saxony, inflict upon the unchaste bitter punishment, and oftentimes death. Remember the eternal Judge; remember, fornication is the snare of death and pit of hell, the whirlpool of destruction. Have regard to that regal dignity to which, without any merit of your own, God has raised you; and yield it not, together with yourself, who have been made to the image of God, to become the image of the malignant spirit. Spare your people, lest, becoming by your example a Sodomite race, they become enfeebled and degenerate, weak in war, inconstant in the faith, neither honourable before men, nor pleasing to God; and, like the Spaniards and Burgundians under the yoke of the Saracens, they fall, in the just judgments of God, beneath some foreign dominion.

“We are also told that you have violated the privileges, and seized the property, of churches and monasteries. The Scripture says: ‘He that stealeth anything from his father or from his mother: and saith, This is no sin, is the partner of a murderer.’ Our Father is God, who created us: our Mother is the

Church, which has given us spiritually a second birth in baptism. Therefore, he who by fraud or violence has seized the wealth of Christ and the Church, will be considered a homicide in the sight of the just Judge.

"From the time of St. Augustine's preaching to the days of Ceolred of Mercia, your predecessor, and Osred of Northumbria, the privileges of churches remained inviolate. When these kings, by diabolical instinct, taught by wicked example the public commission of two sins, violating the enclosures of monasteries, and sinning with nuns, they perished miserably, Osred by a death contemptible and miserable, Ceolred by a sudden fit of madness, while banqueting in the midst of his nobles, and then by a miserable end, 'without penance, or confession, or viaticum.' Beware of the pit into which others have fallen; beware of the snares of the enemy, by which your relations have been strangled. 'What will it avail a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' " In these and other similar terms, did St. Boniface urge the king to abandon his sinful habits. He wrote, at the same time, to Heresfrid a priest, to ask him to explain to Ethelbald the words of the above epistle.

In the letter to Archbishop Cuthbert, St. Boniface makes known, in the first place, the proceedings of the synod which he had just held. "These things we decreed," he says, "in this our synodal assembly, and we declared that we would preserve the Catholic faith, and unity, and subjection to the Roman Church, to the end of our life; that we would be subject to St. Peter and his Vicar; that we would hold a synod every year; that the metropolitans should apply to the same see for their palliums, and in all things should strive to follow canonically the precepts of St. Peter, in order that they may be numbered among the sheep intrusted to him: and this confession we all consented to and subscribed, and sent to the body of St. Peter, the prince of the Apostles. The Roman clergy and Pontiff received it with congratulations."

Then follow various regulations. Amongst others, each priest is to render an annual account of his faith

and ministry to his bishop. Each bishop is to make an annual visitation of his diocese, to teach, to confirm, and to suppress divinations, auguries, the wearing of philacteries or charms, and other pagan superstitions. The archbishop is to watch over the conduct of the other bishops. Each bishop, when unable to correct something in his own diocese, is to submit it to the archbishop in synod, according to the obligation which "at our consecration the Roman Church has laid upon us by oath." If the archbishop proved equally unsuccessful, he was to refer it "always faithfully to the Apostolic See and the Vicar of St. Peter."

Then follows a long passage on a bishop's remaining at his post, notwithstanding its dangers; on the imperative duty of pastors, at the peril of their own salvation, to reprove the sins of their people, whether rich or poor, "in season and out of season."

After this long introduction, St. Boniface suggests that "a synod and the princes" should forbid women to go on pilgrimage to Rome;* that kings and ealdormen, who had taken possession of monasteries, ruling them as if abbots, and keeping their "money, which was purchased by the blood of Christ," should be rebuked, and unless they gave up their ill-gotten prizes, should be cut off as heathens and publicans from communion with the Church of God;† that the vain and hateful worship of dress which the ministers of the devil had unhappily introduced, even into the cloister, should be strongly repressed; that drunkenness should be proscribed, a sin which neither

* Wilk. Conc. i. p. 93. Perhaps he meant that they should be forbidden to go in throngs. To "forbid that road *and that thronging*," is the expression:—"Si prohiberet synodus et principes vestri mulieribus et velatis feminis illud iter et frequentiam quam ad Romanam civitatem veniendo et redeundo faciunt." This lamentable abuse of the holy custom of pilgrimage will never be impartially estimated, unless the circumstances of these women in their own country, and the general depravity of the Northumbrians and Mercians be borne in mind: it seems that it was not so much the ordinary dangers of long travelling through many countries, as the corrupt state of mind of the travellers, that caused the mischief.

† This was a seizure of real, not of nominal, monasteries.

Franks, nor Gauls, nor Lombards, nor Romans, nor Greeks, commit, which "is an evil peculiar to pagans and to our race," from which even some of the bishops themselves are not free; and, lastly, that the bishops compel the kings to abandon a custom, unheard of in every other part of the Christian world, that of "the compulsory service of monks, in regard to the royal works and buildings."

These urgent letters seem to have aroused the zeal both of princes and prelates; and this salutary feeling was further stimulated by messages from the Holy See.

A council was therefore assembled at Clovesho, or Clyff,* by the joint efforts of King Ethelbald and Archbishop Cuthbert. Besides Cuthbert, there were present the bishops of Rochester, Leicester, Lichfield, Hereford, Winchester, Sherburn, the united see of Dumnoc and Helman, London, Worcester, Lincoln, and Selsey. Many abbots and other ecclesiastics were likewise present.

All things being arranged, two manuscripts were produced, being the epistles of Pope Zachary. In obedience to his command, these documents were distinctly read, both in Latin and English. They contained paternal exhortations to amendment of life, but threatened anathema to those that persisted in their evil courses.

After this, the bishops delivered mutual exhortations, and began the principal business of the synod. The following is the substance of the canons which were enacted:—

1—4. Bishops were to devote themselves to their pastoral charge in fervent holiness of life and doctrine, careful not to appear to be given to secular business more than to the service of God. They were to visit their dioceses every year, to assemble the people in

* Near Rochester, says Godwin (*De Præs.*), as well as Camden, (see *supra*, p. 99). Sharpe, joint editor with Petrie, of the *Monumenta Hist. Brit.*, leans to Somner's opinion, that it was Abingdon, then called Sheovesham, which may have been incorrectly copied Cleovesham (note to p. 216).

suitable places, to teach those who rarely hear the word of God, and to prohibit divinations, incantations, and other pagan superstitions.

5. With regard to the monasteries of seculars, "if it is lawful so to call" those places, although they are kept by tyranny and avarice, and not by the appointment of the Divine law, nevertheless, for the salvation of the inhabitants, let the bishops approach such places, and provide the ministry of a priest, in case of danger of death.

6. Let the bishops ordain to the sacred grade of priesthood no one whose knowledge and good conduct they have not previously ascertained.

7. Let the bishops and abbots excite in the hearts of their subjects a deep-rooted love of study, for the salvation of souls and the glory of the Eternal King. For it is a subject of much grief that very few are to be found with such a love of sacred study: the holy Scriptures have few charms for young men entangled in the frivolity and vain-glory of the present life. In the schools, then, let the pupils be coerced and trained to the love of sacred studies by exercise; nor let the rectors be so greedy of the business of the earth, as to suffer the house of God to become squalid in the want of spiritual garniture.

8—12. Let priests remember that it is their duty to refrain from secular business and lawsuits; to devote themselves to the office of the altar, the celebration of mass, the singing of psalms; to study and prayer, and the care of everything belonging to the Divine worship; as well as to render all possible aid to abbots and abbesses; and, by word and example, in preaching, baptizing, and visiting, to incite all that are subject to them to the service of God. Let them be able to interpret and expound in their own tongue the Apostles' Creed and Lord's Prayer, "as well as likewise the most holy words which are solemnly uttered in the celebration of mass, and in the office of baptism. Let them also study to know that the sacraments themselves, which, in the mass and baptism, or in

other ecclesiastical offices, are visibly conferred, spiritually signify." "Let them not babble in the church in the fashion of the minstrels of the world, nor with tragic tone clip and confuse the joinings and divisions of the sacred words, but follow a simple and holy melody, according to the custom of the Church." Those that cannot, must be content with simple reading.

13. In all festivals of our Lord, and in all things regarding baptism, mass, and the style of singing, let us follow the written copy which we have received "from the Roman Church. Let the festivals of the saints be kept according to the martyrology of the same Roman Church."*

14. Let the Lord's-day be observed with due reverence; and let all abbots and priests on that most holy day, avoiding unnecessary travelling, remain in their churches and monasteries, and have solemn mass; and in the course of the day, as well as on other great festivals, often explain the Holy Scriptures to their people.

15. In the singing and reading of the seven canonical hours, let there be only that which is drawn from Holy Scripture, and which the custom of the Roman Church permits. Let ecclesiastics and monks say these hours, not for themselves only, but for kings and all Christian people.

16. Let the Litanies, that is, the Rogations, be kept, both by clergy and people, with great reverence, on the following days:—"On 25th April, according to the rite of the Roman Church, which is called by it the Greater *Litany*. Also, according to the custom of our forefathers, let the three days previous to the Ascension of our Lord into heaven, be kept with

* "Celebrentur juxta exemplar, videlicet quod scriptum de Romana habemus Ecclesia juxta martyrologium ejusdem Romanæ Ecclesiæ."—(Ap. Wilk. i. p. 96.) "Nihilque quod communis usus non admittit præsumant cantare aut legere, sed tantum quod ex Sacrarum Scripturarum auctoritate descendit, et quod Romanæ Ecclesiæ consuetudo permittit, cantent vel legant."—Ap. Wilkins, i. p. 97.

fasting to the ninth hour, and with the celebration of mass; not with sports and horse-racing, and great banquets, but rather with fear and trembling, with the sign of Christ's Passion, and our eternal redemption, and with public processions of the relics of His saints, whilst all the people humbly, on bended knee, seek from the Divine clemency the pardon of their sins."

17. Let the birthday of Pope Gregory, and the day of the decease of St. Augustine, be kept holy; and let the name of our blessed father and doctor, St. Augustine, be always chanted in the litany, after the name of St. Gregory.

18. Let no one presume to neglect the fast of the Ember-days.* Let all keep it obediently to the "copy which we possess, written out according to the rite of the Roman Church."

19—21. Let monks and nuns be subject to their superior, love concord, and use a simple garb, and not a showy dress in the manner of worldlings. Let the bishops see that the monasteries be what their name imports, the dwellings of those that for God's sake love silence and labour; that they be not the receptacles of poets, minstrels, and buffoons, but of persons given to prayer, study, and the praises of God; and that the laity have not permission to roam through the monasteries—an injurious and vicious custom, especially in the monasteries of nuns not strictly observing their rule. Let not the abodes of nuns be chambers of filthy talking, drunkenness, and rioting, nor places for weaving and adorning garments with the varied hues of vain-glory; but the abodes of sobriety, study, and psalmody.

22. Let all religious and ecclesiastics, prepare themselves incessantly to become worthy of "the most holy communion of the body and blood of the Lord." If superiors discover that any of their subjects are of negligent or abandoned life, and

* "*Jejunia quatuor temporum*," says Will. of Malm. So Egbert, in Thorpe's *Anc. Laws and Institutes*.

take not care to confess and amend their vices, let them sharply rebuke them.

23. Let boys who have escaped the corruption of an age prone to evil, communicate frequently; also let those of a more advanced age, whether married or single, who are not entangled in sinful habits, be admonished to communicate frequently, that they fall not away for want of this salutary meat and drink, the Lord saying, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life remaining in you."

24—25. Let the bishops on quitting the synod, hold in their respective dioceses an assembly of the priests, abbots, and superiors, and make known to them the decrees of the synod; and whatever each bishop is unable to correct, let him lay before the archbishop in synod. Let laymen be well proved before they are admitted to be monks.

26. Let the faithful give daily alms; but while they give their money to God, let them not, by their sins, give themselves to the devil. Nor let them give alms in order to escape making "satisfaction by fasting, and the other works of expiation:"* the more grievous their sins have been, the more resolute be their abstinence from even lawful things. "For it is indeed good to persevere in chanting psalms; it is good to make frequent genuflexions with a true intention; it is good to give alms every day; but for the sake of these, abstinence is not to be abandoned, nor is the fasting to be relaxed, which has once been imposed by the rule of the Church, without which no sins are remitted." †

27. Psalmody is a great and manifold balm of the soul, to those that discharge this divine office in heart and mind. Although, when singing Latin, a person

* "Non sit elemosina porrecta ad minuendam vel ad mutandam satisfactionem per jejunium, et reliqua expiationis opera," &c.

† "Juxta ecclesiæ regulam, sine qua non remittuntur ulla peccata," &c.

were not to understand the words, nevertheless he ought suppliantly to refer, and with all his strength to keep firm, the intentions of his heart, to those things which should then be asked of God. For the psalms, being delivered of old by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of the prophet, for the consolation of the human race, should be sung for this, that by appeasing God's anger, or making the petitioners draw more closely to Him, they may deserve to be heard more readily, whether the petitioners pray for themselves, "or even whether kneeling in prayer, and having completed some psalmody in behalf of others, living or dead, they say in Latin, or if they do not know it, in their own Saxon: 'Lord, have mercy on him, and punish not his sins, and convert him, that he may do Thy will:' or this for the dead: 'Lord, according to Thy great mercy, give rest to his soul, and according to Thy boundless compassion, vouchsafe to grant him the joys of eternal light, together with Thy saints.' " *

Let every one, with groaning of heart, himself implore the Divine mercy; and then let him obtain the prayers of others likewise. Very different, however, has of late been the custom of some of those that are rich, as far as this world is concerned. They trust to the psalmody and fasting of others for the expiation of their crimes. If this be the way to appease the Divine justice, why are the rich (O stupid promisers), who are able to buy with their wealth innumerable fasts from others, said by the mouth of truth to enter heaven with greater difficulty than a camel to pass through the eye of a needle? Would that you alone, who are deservedly called the gates of hell, may perish beneath the wrath of God, before others are involved in your destruction!

28. Let no one receive a greater number into his

* "Sive id pro mortuis: Domine, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam, da requiem animæ illius, atque ei, pro tua immensa pietate, gaudia lucis æternæ donare cum tuis sanctis dignare."—Wilkins, vol. i. p. 99.

community than he is able to support. Let all, both monks and clerics, wear the customary garb of their state, taking care not to imitate the men of the world, in the use of bands around their legs, nor in the wrapping up of their head, contrary to the custom of the Church.

In like manner let not nuns, after having received the veil and "the habit of holy profession," any more assume the secular dress, going in rich and beautiful garments, like young women in the world; but let them use a garb that betokens humility of heart and contempt of the world.

29. After this synod, let no one, whether cleric, or monk, or nun, reside among the laity in the houses of seculars; but let all return to their respective monasteries, whether they left them of their own accord, or were expelled by the violence of others, a misfortune which has happened in many places.

30. Let ecclesiastics and monks pray not for themselves only, but for kings and dukes, and for the safety of all Christian people. Let them pray for them when living, and when dead, "let the celebration of the merciful Atonement be more frequently made for the repose of their souls, through the offices of very many priests of Christ,—provided, however, that when living they made themselves worthy of this mark of attention." *

* "Et ut pro viventibus divina precaretur clementia, et pro mortuis piæ placationis celebratio sæpius pro illarum requie animarum," &c.—(Sp. t. ii. p. 255.) Spelman tells us that the only manuscript which he ever saw of this Council was an ancient one, containing Saxon characters, and not divided by stops, or marks of any kind. Its style, as he justly remarks, is neither simple nor consecutive: the want of careful correction of the press in his own volumes has added to the evil.—See his *Concilia*, tom. i. pp. 230—256.

William of Malmesbury, in his fear of being tedious, gives (as he tells us) only the headings—scarcely, indeed, the very merest headings: thus—"Ninth: That priests themselves should not receive money for baptizing children:" whereas it prescribes that priests in their respective parishes should strive to fulfil their apostolic office by baptizing, teaching, and visiting, with lawful rite and legitimate care, and by being on their guard not to give bad example to seculars

As soon as the synod closed, Cuthbert sent to Boniface a copy of its acts.

To atone, it would seem for his share in the infringement of the rights of churches and monasteries, Ethelbald now released them all from the obligation of presenting gifts for the royal table, and from taxes and services of every kind, except the "Trinoda Necessitas."

Whether he thoroughly amended his life, we are not informed; but certain it is, that after a long and prosperous reign, he was cut off by a sudden and violent death.*

Whilst the province of Canterbury was thus repressing evil customs, whether in Mercia or elsewhere, the province of York was probably exerting itself with equal vigour, if we may judge from the character of its archbishop, Egbert, and from the little that is known of his actions.

Treasuring up the advice of Venerable Bede, Egbert, after many appeals to Rome, obtained the pallium, St. Paulinus having, it appears, been the only previous archbishop of York.† Egbert then consecrated two suffragan bishops, Fruitwald to the see of Witherne in Galloway, and Fruidbert or Fredbert to the see of Hexham; and continued, likewise, the succession of the bishops of Lindisfarne. Why he did not consecrate others, we are not informed: in the scanty remnant now extant of the historical monu-

or monks, either of drunkenness, or *love of gain*, or filthy talking. His words, then, are not a synopsis, nor are they accurate as far as they go, since nothing is said about receiving money for baptizing children. Similar grave inaccuracies can often be detected in this writer when we are able to compare his statements with authentic documents. It is of the greater importance to remember this, from the fact that, in the period subsequent to Venerable Bede's death, William is sometimes our only guide.

* Kemble's Cod. Dip. tom. i. No. 99; Will. of Malm. Gest. Reg. l. i. sect. 79, 84; Wilk. i. p. 100. The Trinoda Necessitas was the obligation of contributing to the repairing of roads, building of bridges, and the repair and defence of fortresses.

† Yet we find St. Wilfrid signing himself, on one occasion at least, archbishop of York.—See Sax. Chron. an. 675.

ments of that age, we can trace out but little of the course of his life. It is evident, however, from a letter of Pope Paul to King Eadbert, the archbishop's brother, that Egbert was unable to prevent the king from giving several monasteries to one of his courtiers. The abbot, Forthred, had appealed to the Pope in behalf of three monasteries, thus usurped. Paul, therefore, wrote to Eadbert a letter full of apostolical firmness and sweetness, exhorting him, as one truly obedient, for the love of St. Peter, his protector, to restore the three monasteries to the excellent abbot, Forthred.* The result of this appeal, no less than of Venerable Bede's exhortations, is lost with the records of the time.† The acts of the Council of Clovesho, however, may have received their impress from the mind of Venerable Bede, as well as from that of the Apostle of Germany.

Egbert ruled the Church of York no fewer than four-and-thirty years.‡ He has left at least one monument of his worth: "a most noble library," as William of Malmesbury calls it.§ Very useful and apparently extensive libraries had been founded at Canterbury, by the united gifts and efforts of St. Gregory, St. Augustine, Theodore, and Adrian; as well as at Glastonbury, by St. Aldhelm; at Wearmouth, by St. Bennet Biscop, and his successor, the abbot Ceolfrid; and at Hexham, by Acca, the successor of St. Wilfrid. Other collections also, had undoubtedly been made in various places; yet when, a few years later, the learned Anglo-Saxon priest Alcuin petitioned his patron, the emperor of the

* See the Pope's letter ap. Wilk. Concil. v. i. p. 144.

† Of such records, Richard, the prior of Hexham, who lived in the twelfth century, assures us that many had existed, but had in great measure been destroyed in the repeated ravages of the country and the lapse of ages.—See the Prol. to his Description of the See of Hexham, in his "Scriptores X."

‡ See Appendix, A.

§ Continuation of St. Bede, an. 732, 733, and 736; Sax. Chron. an. 763, 766, 777, and 780, &c.; Will. of Malm.; Ric. Prior Hagust. De Statu and Ep. Hag. Eccl. l. i. c. 16.

Franks, to send persons to procure for France some of the flowers of Britain, meaning some of its most valued books, he referred particularly to Egbert's library at York. The preference may be thought to have sprung from partiality, as Alcuin had been educated at York, and had been intrusted with the care of its library: yet he was too learned to be ignorant of the works in other libraries; and too reasonable, we may justly infer, to send to York, if Canterbury were not inferior.*

Egbert was succeeded by Ælbert. Ælbert's holiness and zeal for his flock, his travels and pilgrimages, his numerous scholars, his love of learning, his collection of books, are recited in Latin poetry by Alcuin, in a prolonged and enthusiastic strain.† He employed two of his clergy, Eanbald and Alcuin himself, in building a new and lofty cathedral, with no fewer than thirty altars. It was this bishop that gave to Alcuin the care of the library, which he himself, as well as his predecessor Egbert, had so greatly enriched. To Eanbald, soon after, he resigned the episcopal charge, that he himself might live to God alone.

Alcuin had been reared in the school of York, under the eye of Archbishop Egbert. He afterwards devoted himself to teaching in the same school in which he himself had been educated. When Egbert, and his successor Ælbert, were both dead, and Eanbald was chosen for the see, he despatched Alcuin to Rome for the pallium. On his return, passing through Parma, where Karl the Great, or Charlemagne, was then holding his court, he was pressingly invited by that emperor to take up his abode in France. He reluctantly consented, and although not a monk, was put in the anomalous position of superior of the monastery of St. Martin's, at Tours. When growing old, he endeavoured, but in vain, to obtain the emperor's consent to become a Benedictine monk. His

* St. Bede, Hist. l. v. c. 20, and passim; St. Bede's Life of St. Bened. sect. 4, 6, &c.

† Lines 1396—1596, Sax. Chron. for date.

life, indeed, was not unworthy of the cloister. It was his general custom to fast till evening; and he was devoted to psalmody and prayer. He died at Tours, in 804.*

Nearly twenty years before Alcuin's decease, two legates were despatched by Pope Adrian, "to renew," says the Saxon Chronicle, "the faith and peace which St. Gregory had sent us by Augustine, the bishop. They were worshipfully received, and sent away in peace." Having visited the archbishop of Canterbury, they travelled to Mercia, and presented to Offa, now king of Mercia, and Kynewulf, king of the West Saxons, a letter from the Pope. The kings promised to amend the faults there mentioned.

One of the legates then passed on to Northumbria, and was joyfully received by the king, and by Eanbald, the archbishop of York. In a council there assembled, it was decreed, that every year, in a diocesan synod of each bishopric, the priests should be most carefully examined about faith, so that they should confess and teach the faith apostolic and universal of the six General Councils, "as it has been handed down to us by the Holy Roman Church;" that godfathers and godmothers, answering for those that cannot speak, of their "renunciation of Satan, and his works and pomps, and the belief of faith," must teach them the Lord's Prayer and Belief, as being plighted for this to God himself; that each year, bishops should twice meet in synod, and once make a visitation, and should not allow fear or worldly friendship to shut their

* "De B. Alcuino" (ap. Bolland. 19 May). Alcuin styles himself in his epistle "the deacon." His life was written by a person whose authority was the priest Sigulf, for many years the friend and companion of Alcuin.

William of Malmesbury's ideas about Eanbald are evidently none of the clearest. He speaks of him as "an old man" at the time of his election, and yet "a disciple of Alcuin," and receiving from the latter a letter of congratulation.—(De Ges. Pon. l. iii. 269.) He has mistaken Eanbald II. for Eanbald I. The "son," of whom he writes (A.D. 800) to Ethelhard of Canterbury, was the second Eanbald of York, the former having died in 796.—Sax. Chron.

mouths, but fearing the King of kings, should “lift up their voice in strength” to rebuke sinners and protect the poor, and that they should not act in their councils as judges in secular matters; that kings should cling to discipline lest they perish, obeying in all humility their bishops, “who hold the keys of the kingdom of Heaven,” and are placed over those things that relate to God,* and should not impose an unjust yoke upon the Church, but should honour it as the spouse of the King of Heaven; that men of illegitimate birth should not be chosen to succeed to any inheritance, nor to fill the throne; that no one should dare to lay a sacrilegious hand upon the king, the Lord’s anointed; that if priest or bishop took part in such a crime, they should be degraded; and that all men should bear in mind, that by such a crime they would plunge their souls into the fiery abyss of Judas, the traitor; that judges should not despise the poor, nor receive gifts against the innocent—“With what judgment you judge, you shall be judged”—“Woe to you that join house to house, and lay field to field, even to the end of the place: shall you alone dwell in the midst of the earth?” Let fraud, violence, and rapine be forbidden, and let not unjust taxes be imposed upon the churches of God, nor greater than those which are warranted by the Roman law, and by the ancient custom of emperors, kings, and princes; “and let him who desires to be in communion with the holy Roman Church, and with blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, study to keep himself entirely free from this crime of violence.”† Let the tithes be paid, and alms given, and vows faithfully accomplished. Away with the dress and the tatooing of the pagans. Deprive not your steeds of hearing or smelling: neither mutilate them nor let them eat with you, as many of you do.

* “Quia sicut reges omnibus dignitatibus præsunt; ita et episcopi in his quæ ad Deum attinent.”—Ap. Wilk. i. p. 148.

† “Omniñoque qui sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ et beato Petro principi Apostolorum communicare cupit, ab hoc vitio violentiæ immunem se servare studeat.”—Ap. W. p. 149.

Be converted to the Lord with all your heart in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning. "And according to the judgment of the priests, and the amount of your fault, receive the Eucharist, and produce worthy fruits of penance; for it is a fruitful penance to weep over what has been committed, and never more to commit what has been wept over." "But if any one (which God forbid) depart from this life without penance or confession, prayer is by no means to be said for him. For none of us is without sin, not the infant of one day, as the Apostle says," &c.

These decrees, the king, the bishops and abbots, and the nobles and "people," "pledged themselves, by the aid of heavenly clemency, to observe in every respect, with all the devotion of their minds and to the utmost of their strength: and by the sign of the Holy Cross in your stead, by our hand, they confirmed it."

When the signatures had been affixed, with "the sign of the Holy Cross," the legate, accompanied by the ambassadors of the king and of the archbishop of York, proceeded to the court of Offa. There Janbert, or Eanbert, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops of the province, and many nobles, speedily assembled. The decrees of the late synod were read both in Latin and Saxon, and with great joy were welcomed, and signed with their names in the Holy Cross.*

* Ap. Wilk. i. p. 151.

CHAPTER XVIII.

KING OFFA'S ENCROACHMENTS UPON THE SEE OF CANTERBURY AND OTHER CHURCHES—LICHFIELD AN ARCHIEPISCOPAL SEE—OFFA FOUNDS ST. ALBAN'S—THE POPE CONSIDERED BY CHARLEMAGNE THE ARBITER OF KINGS—THE ABUSE OF LAY SUPERIORS IN RELIGIOUS HOUSES REMEDIED—KENULF'S LETTER TO THE POPE—SYNOD OF CALCUITH—KENULF'S DEMANDS AND VIOLENCE—INTERDICT—DECLINE OF MERCIA.

OFFA, the ruler of Mercia, was a prince in whom both good and bad qualities were strangely blended. Jealous of the lustre reflected upon Kent by the archiepiscopal see, and, if we are to believe Coenulf, his own successor, hating both the archbishop and the men of Kent, he determined to obtain for his own kingdom an equal dignity. He forced the archbishop, Lanbright or Eanbert, to produce again and again the charters of his archiepiscopal privileges, and, apparently after what the Saxon Chronicle terms the "contentious" synod of Calcuith, he confiscated all the lands of the see of Canterbury that lay within the frontiers of Mercia. He had, meantime, by repeated and plausible statements, been assiduously importuning Pope Adrian, until he obtained his wish and Lichfield was made an archiepiscopal see, having the primacy over all the country from the Thames to the Humber, and from Wales to the waters of the Irwell and the Wash. It might have appeared to some that it was policy, however short-sighted, that caused Offa to seize the Mercian lands of the see of Canterbury. They must, if so, have been undeceived before the close of his reign; for he despoiled Malmesbury and many other churches of portions of their possessions.*

* Will. of Malm. Ges. Reg. l. i. sect. 86 and 87; and Coenulf's Letter to Leo III. "Rex Offa propter inimicitiam cum venerabili

Yet, after his murder of Ethelbert, he built, as some atonement, the abbey of St. Alban's. On this business, and partly to secure for it special privileges, and partly, it appears, in penance for his sin, he went, in his old age, on a pilgrimage to Rome. His purpose was approved, and his request that the monastery might be exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishops, was granted. Whilst at Rome, he visited the "school of the English," and for the support of the scholars and pilgrims lodging there, he increased the revenues which Ina of Wessex had already bestowed upon it, by assigning to its use a tax, to be ever after levied upon all the twenty shires of his kingdom. Three years before, he had already endowed St. Peter's, at Rome, with the annual sum of three hundred and sixty-five mancuses. This was partly to supply oil for the numerous lamps, and partly to supply aid in supporting the multitudes of pilgrims.*

Having consolidated his power, and now growing old, Offa was rendered uneasy by the exiles, who, fearing his vengeance, had fled from Wessex and other kingdoms to the court of Charlemagne. The latter wrote in 793 to reassure the jealous king, but was too just to surrender them. Writing a second time, he informs him that he had sent them to Rome to be

Lanberto et gente Cantuariorum acceptam," &c. This letter, written by a Mercian, and with the concurrence of the chief men in that and other kingdoms, all contemporaries, is of conclusive authority. The Life of Offa, quoted by Spelman, and reproduced by Wilkins, differs, but to no great extent, from Coenulf's Letter, and from William of Malmesbury's, only mentioning Lanbert in a less, and Offa in a more, favourable manner. It has chronological difficulties almost insuperable (see Wilk. Con. i. note to pp. 152 and 153), and endeavours to make out the king to have been of pre-eminent sanctity; in short, it has no weight in comparison with Coenulf's letter. The writer was a monk of St. Alban's, and Offa was the founder of St. Alban's: the monk's gratitude overpowered his judgment. I cannot, however, coincide with Lingard's opinion, that this monk's statement of Offa's journey to Rome is to be rejected. The monk, it seems, was a contemporary of Offa, having written, as the Life shows, whilst Leicester was still a bishop's see. If so, the fact is incontrovertible.

* Vita Off. ap. Wilk. i. pp. 154—156; Sax. Chron.

tried in the presence of the Pope, and of “your archbishop.” “What greater security can we expect,” he added, “than to have a cause in which opinions are at variance, decided by the examination of the apostolic authority?”*

When Offa was no more, and his son and heir had, after a reign of only four months, become his partner in the tomb, men began to demand the restitution of rights or lands which he had usurped. It was probably in reference to him no less than to other powerful men, that the Council of Beccancelld made its canons. This council is thus described by the Saxon Chronicle.†

“Ethelard, archbishop of Canterbury, held a synod, wherein he ratified and confirmed, by command of Pope Leo, all things concerning God’s monasteries that were fixed in Witgar’s days, and in other kings’ days, saying thus: ‘I, Ethelard, the humble archbishop of Canterbury, with the unanimous concurrence of the whole synod, and of all the congregations of all the ministers, to which in former days freedom was given by faithful men, in God’s name and by His terrible judgment, do decree, as I have command from Pope Leo, that henceforth none dare to choose them lords from common (‘lewd’) men over God’s inheritance; but, as it is in the writ that the Pope has given, or holy men have settled, our fathers and our teachers, concerning holy ministers, so they continue untainted without any resistance. If there is any man that will not observe this decree of God, of our Pope, and of us, but overlooketh it, and holdeth it for nought, let them know, that they shall give an account before the judgment-seat of God. And I, Ethelard, archbishop, with twelve bishops, and with three-and-twenty abbots, this same with the rood-token of Christ confirm and fasten.’”

The abuse of appointing laymen to be superiors of

* “Quid nobis cautius esse poterit, quam ut apostolicæ auctoritatis censura causam discernat, in qua aliquorum dissonat sententia?”—Ap. Wilk. Con. i. p. 159.

† An. 796.

monasteries having thus been condemned, the archbishop of Canterbury thought it time to make an effort to recover the ancient privileges of his church. It was an arduous undertaking, requiring the concurrence of Coenulf, the new king of Mercia, and the general support of the bishops, as well as the confirmation of the Holy See. All, however, succeeded, owing not a little to the support of the archbishop of York.

Coenulf, or Kenulf, was a king, says William of Malmesbury, second to none of his predecessors, religious at home, victorious in the field.* When the two archbishops applied to him in behalf of the church of Canterbury, pointing out to him "how great a crime his predecessor had committed" by rending from it a part of its province, Kenulf received them graciously, and promised them his hearty concurrence. He soon gave proof of his sincerity: he wrote in the names of his "bishops, dukes, and men of every rank," a long epistle to Pope Leo III., requesting the restoration of the ancient privileges of the see of Canterbury. He began with thanking Almighty God for preserving in the way of truth the Church which He had purchased with His precious blood; for raising up constantly for this purpose new leaders as the former ones passed from the world; and for raising up, therefore, Leo, when Adrian had been called to heaven. In obedience to such a leader, he was ready to lend his most strenuous efforts to perform whatever his Holiness should enjoin. He requested his blessing both upon himself and upon his people, "whom your apostolic authority has imbued with the rudiments of faith." "This I humbly beg and long to obtain from you (O most holy one), in order that you may receive me as your specially adopted son, and that I may love, and embrace you as a father, with all the strength of obedience. I implore you then kindly to reply to the request of our bishops and nobles, in order that the tradition of the

* Will. of Malm. De Gest. Reg. l. i. sect. 87 and 95; Ib. De Gest. Pont. l. i. p. 199, ap. Savile.

holy fathers, and the rule which they have transmitted to us, may not, as if unknown, in any respect become vitiated amongst us :” but let your decision come to produce good fruit amongst us, through the mercy of God. Our bishops and our most learned men declare that it is in opposition to the statutes of our father, the most blessed Gregory, that the authority of Canterbury has been rent into two provinces. This was brought about by King Offa’s “enmity towards the Venerable Lanbert and the people of Kent.” Upon this point, then, “deign to write back to us whatever seems good to you, (as a rule) to be afterwards observed by us.” “Deign with affectionate kindness to read carefully the epistle which Ethelard, in presence of all the bishops of our kingdom, has at great length written about the causes and necessities of himself and of all Britain ; and with regard to the contents of that epistle, remember to disclose to us in your truthful writing (or, ‘in a page of truth’) whatever the rule of faith demands.”

Leo, in reply, commended the king’s devotedness to “blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles ;” and reminding him of an acknowledgment in his own letters that “no Christian presumes to gainsay our apostolic decrees,” tells him : “We, by the authority of blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, whose place we fill, though unworthy, do give him, Ethelard, such an episcopate, that if any of his subjects, whether kings or princes, or any one of the people, should transgress the Lord’s commands, he do excommunicate him until he repent, and if he be impenitent, that he be to you as a heathen and a publican.” “With regard to the dioceses both of bishops as well as of monasteries, of which, as you are well aware, he has been unlawfully despoiled,” we, “by our apostolic authority, restore them to him in their ancient integral condition.”* The Pope’s decision was at once obeyed. A council of twelve bishops and four abbots assembled

* See the letters as inserted in Will. of Malm. l. i. sect. 88 and 89 ; also Wilkins’ Concilia.

in consequence at Clovesho. They drew up a charter headed with the text: "Glory be to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will." The deed states it, as a well-known fact, that Offa "presumed with very great fraud to divide and rend the honour and unity of the see of St. Augustine, our father, in the city of Canterbury," having artfully and surreptitiously procured from Adrian the pallium for Lichfield. It declared, "by the unanimous counsel of the whole of the holy synod, and commanded in the name of God Almighty and of all his saints, and by the tremendous judgment, that never should kings, nor bishops, nor princes, nor men of any tyrannical power, presume to diminish, or, in any particle, to divide the honour of St. Augustine and his holy see."*

Amongst those who from the first had expressed their joy at the united efforts of the two archbishops, was Alcuin, who declared openly that Offa's measure had sprung, "not from consideration and reason, but from 'invidious contention,'" or, as he calls it in another place, "a sort of lust of power." When, however, he found that Ethelard himself was going to Rome, he endeavoured to dissuade him, "being unwilling," as he himself wrote, "that the light of Britain should be extinguished." Finding him resolved to go, he made no further opposition, but resigned himself to what was the will of God and for the good of His Church, and earnestly requested the archbishop to be mindful of him at the tombs of the holy Apostles and Martyrs of Christ, as he himself was of the archbishop at the shrine of St. Martin.†

As soon as he now heard that the church of Canterbury had regained its privileges, he wrote a letter of congratulation to Ethelard, thanking God that the archbishop had found "grace in the sight of the

* Cod. Dipl. Ang. Sax. I. No. 185, p. 224; and Wilk. i. p. 166.

† "Maxime autem precor ut apud sanctos apostolos et martyres Christi mei habeatis memoriam, sicut nos apud St. Martinum vestri habere dulce habemus."—Alc. Ep. 173, p. 233.

Apostolic Father," and that "the most sacred see of our first doctor" was restored to its ancient dignity.*

For nearly fifteen years after the re-establishment of the old province of Canterbury, the Church appears to have enjoyed an almost uninterrupted calm. The close of this period is marked by the meeting of a synod at Calcuith. This synod, the last of any importance for many years to come, is the more remarkable, because it has no accompanying circumstances. Few, indeed, are the facts recorded of that period; but none of those few are connected with the council. It rises abruptly upon the view, like a solitary crag upon the sea.

In this council, there was enjoined a remarkable addition to the usual rite of consecrating churches. It was not only ordered that the bishop of the diocese should bless churches with holy water, and go in succession through all the parts of the function, but that when burying relics of saints in the altar, he should place amongst them, or even by itself if relics could not be had, the Eucharist, "because it is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ." Holy pictures, prayers for the dead, and other such matters, were mentioned in the same council:—

I. "When a church is built, let it be hallowed by the bishop of that diocese. Let him bless water, let him sprinkle it, and let him successively complete the rite prescribed in the book of ceremonies. Afterwards, let the Eucharist, which has been consecrated by the bishop during the function, be buried with the other relics in their receptacle, and preserved in the same basilica. And if he cannot put the other relics within it, this nevertheless will avail in an especial manner, because it is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ."

II. "So also we command every bishop to have painted upon the wall of the chapel, or upon a wooden

* Ep. 60 and 63, p. 84; Will. of Malm. De Gest. Pont. l. i. p. 199, and l. iii. p. 269.

tablet, or even upon the altars, “the saint to whom each of them is dedicated.”*

III. The same council decreed, that abbots and abbesses should be chosen by the bishop of the diocese, with the consent and concurrence of the religious; that no superior should presume to diminish, or give as an inheritance to any one, the church lands, except for one life, and then only after obtaining the permission of the community; that as the regular life, the election and the blessing by the bishop of the abbot or abbess, and the exclusion from such a house of the presence and dominion of seculars, have not been appointed by us, but existed long before, and may be found mentioned in the Council of Chalcedon, so by our authority we confirm the same, and in the name of Almighty God we command all such observances to be adhered to, as it has been appointed in the ancient canons. If any one, being a clergyman, or a religious, whether man or woman, dare to despise our command and the institutions of apostolic men, let him know that his punishment is degradation and excommunication.

IV. When any bishop dies, we enjoin all his fellow-prelates, whether of our own or any future time, to distribute in behalf of his soul a tenth part of all their substance, and to give liberty to every Englishman who may then be in servitude. As soon as the bishop's death is known, let the “assembly of the servants of God” in every church throughout all the dioceses assemble at the sound of the bell, and “sing thirty psalms for the soul of the deceased.” “And afterwards let every bishop and abbot cause six hundred psalms and one hundred and twenty masses to be chanted; and free three men, giving three

* “Et si alias reliquias intimare non potest, tamen hoc maximum proficere potest, quia corpus et sanguis est Domini nostri Jesu Christi.”—(Ap. Wilk. i. p. 169, cap. ii.) Chapter II. breathes of the spirit of St. Augustine and his little band, with their cross and their picture of our Redeemer, of St. Bennet Biscop, when he decorated his churches with Roman paintings, and of St. Ceolfred, when he “adored the cross” on his departure from Jarrow.

pounds to each of them. And let all the servants of God fast one day," and recite for him the canonical hours during thirty days, as well as seven belts of Pater Nosters.* "So that by the common grace of intercession, they may deserve to obtain the eternal kingdom, common to all the saints."

V. Bishops and priests were not to exercise their functions out of their own proper limits, unless by permission of the person then possessing jurisdiction. From this rule were excepted the two cases of baptism and sickness; in which every priest was allowed, and even bound, to exercise his ministry.

In the baptism of infants, the blessed water was not to be poured upon the head, but the baptism by immersion was to be used.† From this an inference may be drawn, that in the case of adults it was the discipline of the Anglo-Saxon Church to administer baptism by infusion upon the head.

When the synod had closed, the public attention became engrossed in a contest between the king and Wilfrid, the archbishop of Canterbury. Even before the synod, some indications of it were visible. Kenulf, as if desirous at last of imitating Offa, had appropriated some of the archiepiscopal property. What followed is communicated only in obscure fragments; but there transpired, in a council at Clovesho, enough to prove that the archbishop continued for many years to suffer from the king's violence. The latter, it seems, made fresh demands: claimed certain manors, and demanded a sum of one hundred and twenty pounds of silver. All this the archbishop refused. The king then stated his case to the Holy See, and in such a way as to make it appear that Wilfrid was wrong. However that may be, the kingdom was put under an interdict.‡ In this state of the question,

* "Et vii. beltidum Pater Noster pro eo cantetur."

† Wilk. i. pp. 169, 171.

‡ If I understand aright the strong but brief expression—"Tota gens Anglorum per sex annorum ferme curricula, sua primordiale auctoritate, sacrique baptismatis ministerio privata sit".—Ap. Wilk. i. p. 172.

certain powerful noblemen suggested to Wilfrid, whom "they greatly loved," to make his submission, on the understanding that the king would remove the impression against the archbishop which he had produced at Rome, and would restore to the see at Canterbury all the power and dignity which it had ever before enjoyed. How often has such well-meant advice been injudiciously assented to. The archbishop made the submission, yielded both the land and the money, and the king, having now on his side the forms of law, and all other external proofs of right, triumphed in his ungenerous advantage, and kept both land and money.*

Three years after, Kenulf died, and Mercia never more raised its head among the nations (about A.D. 821). St. Kenelm, Kenulf's son and heir, was put to death, at the instigation of his own sister, Quendrida. An old church among the Clent Hills, near Stourbridge, still marks the spot, and bears St. Kenelm's name.

Whilst one violent deed succeeded another, and four kings held the Mercian sceptre only for as many years, and foreign invasion was overthrowing what civil war had spared, there was happily still time enough, during the brief intervals of peace, for the recognition of the claims of Wilfrid, and for full reparation to his afflicted church.†

* Ap. Wilk. i. p. 172.

† Compare Sax. Chron. ; Will. of Malm. De Gest. Reg. l. i. sect. 95 and 96 ; and Wilk. i. p. 172—174. The discrepancies of two or three years between these different authorities I must leave to others to arrange. They are not such as in any way to interfere with the facts.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DANISH INVASIONS—THE COUNTRY AND MANNERS OF THE DANES—SACK OF LINDISFARNE—ALCUIN'S SYMPATHY AND PREDICTION—SOME DECAY OF DISCIPLINE AND LEARNING—ETHELWULF—HIS WILL AND TESTAMENT—LODBROG—DESCENT OF HIS SONS UPON NORTHUMBRIA—FLIGHT FROM LINDISFARNE WITH THE BODY OF ST. CUTHBERT—SUCCESSIVE RAVAGES OF THE WHOLE COUNTRY—ALGAR'S VALIANT DEFENCE AND DEATH—SACK OF MONASTERIES—DEATH OF ST. EDMUND—ETHELRED OF WESSEX—HIS VALOUR AND DEVOTION—HIS REPEATED CONFLICTS WITH THE DANES—MORTALLY WOUNDED.

A CALAMITY was now falling upon Britain, hardly less than even that which, four centuries before, it had suffered from the Saxons, Picts, and Scots. The Scandinavian tribes were continuing that scourge of invasion, which the Huns had hardly as yet ceased from inflicting, and it was their task to desolate what the Huns had spared. The Huns had come from the east of Asia. Their inroads were confined to the continent. Their desolating hordes had never swarmed upon Britain. They knew nothing of maritime affairs: they were a nation of horsemen. The Scandinavians, on the contrary, were a nation of hardy mariners. The German Sea, that had guarded Britain from the Huns, was their common pathway; they delighted in the roar of the tempest. The cliff-bound fiords or creeks of Norway penetrate deep into the land; and the land itself is one of mountain and forest. It seems a spot made alike for the birthplace and the asylum of navies. Denmark and Sweden too, with their numerous islands and extensive sweep of seacoast, had facilities for piracy almost equal to those of Norway. The inhabitants of these countries had never learned that other nations were their brethren. They were pagans, whose impious religion

taught them to be the pillagers and slayers of men. They delighted in blood and the clash of shields, no less than in the terrors of the storm. It was their inhuman sport to dash out the brains of infants, or to toss them on the points of their spears.

Such was the wild race that was now sailing in myriads from the fiords of Norway, and the bays and islands of the Baltic. While the Huns still ravaged the centre, and the Saracens the south of Europe, these Northern pirates swooped down upon every shore from Iceland, the Orkneys, and even the shores of North America, to the Straits of Gibraltar and the Balearic Isles.

Amongst other places thus attacked, was the island of Lindisfarne. The peaceful occupations of the monks could afford no protection: it excited the scorn, as their religion excited the hatred, of these men of blood. Nothing was revered; nothing spared. The altars were stripped and overturned; the whole island was ransacked; and the monks, in the midst of cruel insults, were put to the sword or cast into the sea, or carried off into a ruthless slavery. The vengeance of St. Cuthbert, adds the chronicler, fell upon the spoilers. On the neighbouring coast, the inhabitants flew to arms and slew the Danish leader. The pirates took to their ships. There, even upon their own element, they were no longer safe. A tempest swallowed up nearly all their army; and of the survivors most were driven back upon the land, and destroyed by the people (A.D. 794).*

Hearing of the ravage at Lindisfarne, Alcuin wrote an epistle to the king and chiefs of Northumbria, and to the monks of Wearmouth and Jarrow, to exhort them to take warning by that visitation, and amend their lives.† “The pagans,” he said, “have contaminated the sanctuaries of God, and have shed the blood of the saints around the altar. They have

* Sim. Dun. De Gest. Reg. an. 793, 794; ap. Mon. Hist. Br.

† Ep. 8, 10, and 218; Opera, Ratisbon, 1777, tom. i. pp. 147, 21, 11, and 281.

trampled on the bodies of the saints in the temple of God. What trust can the churches of Britain have, if holy Cuthbert with so great a number of saints does not defend his own? Either this is the beginning of a greater trouble, or the sins of the inhabitants have drawn it upon them. But now you that are left stand manfully, fight valiantly, defend the camp of God. Remember Judas Maccabæus." If there be anything you should correct—vanity of dress, drunkenness, or anything else—correct it quickly. Yet be not discouraged: God chastiseth "every child whom He receives." Jerusalem, the city of God, perished by the flames of the Chaldeans. Rome, though "encircled with a crown of holy Apostles, and of innumerable martyrs, was torn asunder by the devastation of the pagans, but in mercy has been quickly restored." Nearly all Europe has been depopulated by the swords and flames of the Huns; yet now it shines with churches as heaven with stars, and in these churches the offices of religion flourish and increase. "Let us despise the riches of the earth and the pomp of the worldly; and tread in the footsteps of the saints whose lives we praise."*

The pagans, he says in another epistle, are growing accustomed to the ravage of our shores. The nations and kings are at war. Few kings are there of the old

* Alcuin thus speaks of the virtue of all Britain in his own days:—

"Per vos, O Patres, nostro sub tempore tota
Virtutum meritis fœcunda Britannia floret."

Close of an Ep. to Ethelard of Cant.; see Alc. Op. tom. i. ep. 9; Ratisb. 1777.

Not many years after, he thus describes the vices and miseries of his country:—

"Ecce loca sancta a paganis vastata; altaria perjuriis fœdata; monasteria adulteriis violata; terra sanguine dominorum et principum fœdata."—An. 796; ib. ep. 43, p. 57.

When Eanbald of York had united with Ethelard for the restoration of the see of Canterbury, Alcuin expressed his hope that the churches of Christ would be exalted, "et Deo in eis servientium vitam corrigi, quæ magna ex parte diu corrupta viluit;" so that, he continues, only the tonsure remains to show what they are, they having adopted the dress and superfluity of banquets, and other customs common to the world.—Ep. 173, p. 233.

royal stock. "In the same way, even in the churches of Christ, the teachers of truth have died off; almost all follow the vanities of the world, and hate regular discipline. Read in Gildas, the wisest of the Britons, the cause of the ruin of the British. Remember the saying of Truth himself: 'Every kingdom divided against itself shall not stand.'" Recall your venerable and wise bishop Ethelard: bow to his injunctions, and in prayer and fasting seek the mercy of God.*

Thus, with alternate praise and rebuke, did Alcuin, as became both a patriot and a Christian, strive to arouse his countrymen. Where he speaks of their vices, his praise of their virtues should not be forgotten; and where he speaks of their ignorance, his own eulogium of Ælbert and others should be borne in mind. Indeed, what Egbert and Ælbert his successor were in learning, about the middle of the eighth century,† Ethelard of Canterbury was towards its close;‡ and St. Swithun, bishop of Winchester, and Alstan of Sherborne, were in the middle of the following century.§ Other names of talent and learning might be added to the scanty list; but these few are a sufficient proof that the nurseries of learning were neither forsaken nor altogether unproductive. Alcuin's language, therefore, must be understood with many limitations.

The scourge, however, was not yet to be removed. Although Egbert of Wessex had subjugated the whole of Britain, the Danes feared not to encounter his arms; and in at least one sanguinary engagement, they seem to have wrested victory from his grasp.|| Though at first generally beaten back to their ships, they contrived to secure plunder enough to tempt others to join them in repeated incursions. Ethelwulf, the son

* Ep. 59, p. 78.

† Alcuin, *supra*, 107, G.

‡ See Pope Leo's letter to Kenulf, in William of Malmesbury, l. i. sect. 89.

§ Will. of Malm. l. ii. sect. 108.

|| Anglo-Sax. Chron. 787, &c.; Will. of Malm. l. i. sect. 73; l. ii. sect. 107.

of Egbert, guided by the wisdom of his former preceptor, St. Swithun, bishop of Winchester, and especially of Alstan, bishop of Sherborne, displayed a vigour in ruling his people and repelling invasion that was hardly to be expected from his sluggish temperament.* The Scandinavians, however, persisted in their incursions. They swarmed over Kent and many other parts of the island, pillaged Canterbury and London, and totally defeated the king of Mercia (A.D. 851). These advantages, however, were so dearly bought, in consequence of Ethelwulf's watchful vigour, and the rovers were at last so totally defeated, that for the rest of his life they dreaded the shores of England, and sought others that were less jealously guarded.

Being no longer annoyed by their incursions, Ethelwulf prepared to go on pilgrimage to Rome (A.D. 855). Before his departure, he "freed the tenth part of all his kingdom from all regal service and tribute, and with an everlasting subscription in the cross of Christ, he made a sacrifice of it to the God who is One and Three, for the redemption of his soul and of the souls of his ancestors." †

He did not long survive his return from Rome, dying in 858. In his last will he enjoined, "for the good of his soul, that, out of every ten tenants on his lands of inheritance, a poor person, or a pilgrim, should be supported with food, drink, and clothing, even to the day of judgment, as long as the said land was stocked with men and cattle. He provided, also, that for the good of his soul," 300 mancuses should be yearly sent to Rome; 100 in honour of St. Peter, and especially to buy oil for all the lamps of that apostolic church, "on the vespers of the Pasch, and in like manner at cock-crowing;" 100 mancuses for the same

* Asser. Will. of Malm. De Gest. Reg. l. ii. sect. 108. ‡

† Ap. Monumenta, p. 470; see also Kemble's Cod. Diplom. ii. p. 56.

‡ Asser, De Reb. Alf. ap. Monum. p. 470.

purpose in St. Paul's church, and 100 mancuses "for the universal apostolic Pope." *

When Ethelwulf had been gathered to his fathers, the Danes again landed, and attacking Winchester, the populous capital of Wessex, reduced it to ashes. In the north, about the same time, Ragnar Lodbrog, one of their fiercest sea-kings, was wrecked upon the land of Northumbria. He was captured and put to death, as the plague of the human race. Osbert and Ella, the chief men of that country, might have learned a salutary lesson from his arrival. They had been contending for the crown, and plundering the Church. It was time to unite and rule with justice. Intent, however, upon their private views, they heeded not the signs of the times; and soon their country was overwhelmed, and they themselves destroyed. The sons of Ragnar, hearing of their father's death, were collecting thousands of warriors eager for blood, plunder, and revenge. Before long their vast fleet covered the Ouse; and York itself was their prey. The rival princes united, too late, against them; and were slain, one in battle, and the other under torture. The victorious invaders riot now at will, in the spoils of Northumbria and Mercia. The Northumbrians, indeed, to the north of the Tyne, were undisturbed for several years; but, at last, they hear that the enemy is approaching. All is terror and confusion. Tyne-mouth is pillaged; churches and monasteries, on all sides, are in flames; and now the march of the Danes is for Lindisfarne. Eardulf, its bishop, has no alternative but to die or to flee from that isle so endeared by its saintly reminiscences and holy relics. He, therefore, took the uncorrupted body of St. Cuthbert, and with it the head of St. Oswald, and the relics of other saints; and sadly journeyed forth. Scarcely had he disappeared, when the Danes arrived. They gave the religious that still remained to insult and death, and Lindisfarne and all the neighbouring churches and monasteries to the flames.

* Asser, De Reb. Alf. ap. Monum. p. 472.

For nine years they thus continued to trample down the whole country, from the German Ocean to the Irish Sea. For nine years, too, the bearers of St. Cuthbert's body, it is said, continued their long pilgrimage, hurrying from place to place, according to the movements of the enemy, and being, for some time, accompanied by a multitude of the faithful. The bishop and two, or sometimes three, monks accompanied the relics. As monks had become very rare, the offices were sung, not only by the handful of religious that always continued as we are assured, but by clerics who supplied, in some degree, the want of monks. When the nine years of pilgrimage on the Northumbrian hills had terminated, the wanderers found a resting-place at Conchester, or Chester-le-Street. It was not, however, until after the Norman conquest and the ravage of the north, that St. Cuthbert's body found, in the cathedral of Durham, a fixed abiding-place.

Five years before St. Cuthbert's body was thus carried from Landisfarne, a vast army of the Danes began its long and desolating march for the most southern portion of the island.

After crossing the Humber,* they marched about midway between Lincoln and Horncastle. There, on the banks of the Witham, they came upon the flourishing monastery of Bardney. Leaving it a smoking blood-stained ruin, and the country around a desert, they continued their desolating career towards the south of Lincolnshire.

The inhabitants must have heard of the success of the pagans in Northumbria, and a year or two previously, had themselves felt their desolating presence; yet, dismayed as they were, weakened also as they were by a two years' famine,† they did not hesitate: at the call of the ealdorman Algar, they assembled at

* Simeon, *Hist. de Dunelm.* Eccl. lib. ii. c. 6—13, 15. The Saxon Chronicle describes them as having "ridden over" parts of Mercia.

† *Comp. Asser*; pp. 474 and 475; and *Sax. Chron. an. 868, 869*, ap. *Mon. Hist. Brit.* 1848.

Kesteven, in small bands, from all the Holland district; from Deeping and Boston, and Stamford famous for its hardy youth. Croyland Abbey sent its militia, under Toly, a monk, who was once the most renowned in war of all the thanes in Mercia; and Lincoln too sent a band of five hundred warriors, under the daring veteran Osgot, the reeve.

Falling upon the Danes before their entire force was assembled, the devoted little army of the Angles slew three of their kings, with a multitude of warriors, and drove the rest in confusion to their camp. When pursuers and pursued had reached the tents of the Danes, the battle was fiercely renewed; but, night coming on, Algar recalled his men. That same night, Halfdane, Gothrun, and the other pagan kings and chiefs arrived, and united their forces. Terrified at the news, three-fourths of the Christian host stole away to their homes.

The scanty remnant chanted the Divine office, received the holy Viaticum, and went forth to die for their faith and country. Standing in a compact body, they held their shields over head, rim upon rim, like a solid roof, upon which the arrows hailed in vain; and extended a dense line of spears against the furious, but baffled, charges of the Danish cavalry. Had the Angles continued obedient to orders, it seemed that victory would still be theirs. Evening was now coming on, when the Danes pretended to flee; and disregarding the prohibition of their leaders, the Angles broke their ranks in pursuit. They were at once despatched.

Still courageous, Algar and Toly drew together their contracted ranks, upon a slight eminence. Their enraged enemies dashed upon the little band, with shock upon shock. Algar fell at last, and Toly likewise fell, just as darkness descended upon the scene of blood. The few that survived plunged into an adjoining wood, and hurrying to Croyland, alarmed the monks at their midnight Office.

The abbot immediately commanded the younger

and most vigorous of the community to take the relics, jewels, and charters of foundation, and flee to the neighbouring marshes. While they were collecting these, and throwing many chalices and other plate into a well, they saw the farm-houses of Kesteven bursting into flames one after another, and the fires approaching gradually the banks of their own lake. Hurrying into their barge, for fear of being intercepted, they stole along the dark though sometimes fire-gleaming waters, until they reached the wood of Ancarig. There they abode with the hermit Toret, and other brethren of Croyland.

When the greater part of the community had thus departed, the abbot and the oldest monks having put on their vestments, they and a few boys assembled in choir completed the office which had been interrupted, recited the entire psalter, and celebrated high mass. When the abbot and his aged deacon and subdeacon had communicated, and the mass was now at an end, the church was suddenly filled, not with its usual chant, but with hideous tumult. The Danes had burst in, and in a few moments the life-blood of the abbot was upon the altar, and the corpses of his ministers were stretched upon the sanctuary pavement. Some of the children and old men, when attempting to leave the choir, were seized, and refusing to point out where the treasure lay, were cruelly tortured;—Asker, the prior, in the sacristy, and Lethwin, the sub-prior, in the refectory. By the side of the dying sub-prior, there was standing Brother Turgar, a child of uncommon beauty, only ten years old, begging most earnestly to share his death. Moved with pity, one of the Danish chiefs disguised the child, and retained him as his captive.

The rest of the Danes, meantime, howling with rage in their disappointed lust of treasure, burst open the tombs, and piling the bodies in one heap, set fire even to the dead.

Their march was now for Peterborough. Driving along vast flocks and herds, they approached the gates.

The despairing inhabitants of the neighbourhood had made it their place of refuge, and despite of the arrows and machines of the Danes, repulsed them. A second assault was more successful. As the assailants rushed in, Lubba, the brother of the jarl Ubba, was hurled to the ground by a stone, and was carried lifeless to his tent. Furious as a wild beast, Ubba swayed not his battle-axe against armed men—he left that to the vulgar Danes—but with his own hand he slew every one that wore the dress of a monk. Not a single human being that was found within the abbey, survived the slaughter. The noble library, and all the various portions of the abbey were burnt, and the walls were levelled to the ground.

When the Danes had resumed their march, moving first to Huntingdon and then to Ely, Brother Turgar contrived to escape. He hurried to the monks in the wood of Ancarig, and told them what had happened. Under his directions, they by degrees discovered and buried most of the bodies of their slaughtered friends. They then elected Godric as their new abbot; and clearing away the rubbish, rebuilt some portion of their monastery, as well as time and their scanty means would allow. The mournful elegies sung by Brickstan, one of the monks, famed for his skill in music and poetry, were still in the mouths of the people as late as the Norman Conquest.

While they were thus occupied, two hermits of Peterborough, men of most holy life, came and begged them to bury the slaughtered community. Godric assented. With much difficulty, aided still by the guidance of Brother Turgar, they collected the bodies, eighty-four in number. They buried them in one grave; the abbot being placed in the midst of his children. A public road passed through the cemetery. On one side of this road a little pyramidal monument of stone, three feet high and three feet long, bearing upon it the image of the abbot and his monks, was raised, to mark the spot beneath which the martyred recluses slept. On the opposite side was a

stone cross, bearing sculptured upon it the image of our Saviour. Every year, for the rest of his life, on the anniversary of the slaughter, Godric repaired to this spot, and pitching his tent over the monument, remained for two days saying mass and praying without ceasing for the souls of those that lay beneath.*

The Danes, meantime, consummated the same cruel work at Ely as at Peterborough. But why pause longer over these harrowing atrocities? Edmund, the sainted king of East Anglia, is martyred, being made a butt for Danish arrows, and afterwards beheaded; and now comes the day of trial for Wessex.†

Ethelred, one of the sons of Ethelwulf, was now its ruler, a prince worthy of his high and perilous station. No matter, defeat or victory, he was ever prepared, ever undaunted. Yet scarcely, with all his resolution, could he stem the torrent. His most signal victories seemed fruitless. In the last year of his reign he encountered his ferocious enemy in pitched battle no fewer than nine times. Of these conflicts, that at Escendune, or Aston, in Berkshire, is the most memorable. The Danes seemed to have collected, for that occasion, all their scattered strength. Sidroc, whose war-cry was the terror of Charles the Bald of France, was there, and many another scourge of nations. A hill, upon an open plain, afforded the pagans a good vantage-ground. Between this and the lower spot, on which the Christians were marshalling, grew a solitary thorn-tree, which remained to many succeeding generations a monument of the strife.

* Ingulf, ap. Sav. pp. 865—868. Whatever the merits of some portions of Ingulf's Chronicle (especially his anecdotes—see *Monumenta*, *Introd.*), the above passage is so full of details, that it has all the appearance of being in itself a part of some contemporary writing. The Chronicle of John, abbot of Peterborough, is copied either from Ingulf himself, or from the same contemporary that Ingulf has copied, as a comparison of the texts would easily show.

† Asser, pp. 471—480, ap. *Monum. Sax. Chron.* of Peterborough.

As the Danes had formed their array in two bodies, the English did the same. Ethelred, knowing that the enemy would keep their ground until assailed, determined to hear mass in his tent, before making the assault. Alfred, younger and less cool in danger, was burning to make the attack; and at last, put the whole issue of the day in jeopardy, by leading on his division of the army. The clang of battle must have reached the ears of Ethelred; but he remained at his devotions until the mass was finished. Hastening then to the scene of blood, he found that his brother's men had failed to gain the hill, and were actually giving way. Signing himself with the Cross, he flew to the assault; and the enemy soon found to their cost that they had no craven to encounter. As the battle thickened, and the day wore on, jarl after jarl bit the dust, along with heaps of the less renowned of the combatants. One of the Danish kings, and the two Sidrocs, were now among the slain, and still did Ethelred maintain his blood-stained advance. Terror seized upon the exhausted Danes; and soon their broken array was swept across the country in disastrous flight.

Yet even such a victory proved but a temporary check. The Danes speedily re-assembled, and still furiously pressed on; and Ethelred, exerting himself with unquenchable spirit, was borne away from his last conflict, mortally wounded. A simple tomb in Wimborn minster still bears his name.*

* Ass. Mon. 476, 477; Will. of Malm. De Gest. Reg. l. ii. sect. 118, 119, &c.

CHAPTER XX.

ALFRED THE GREAT—HIS FAULTS—THE POPE'S ADMONITION—
 EXPELLED FROM HIS KINGDOM BY THE DANES—LEARNS WISDOM
 FROM ADVERSITY—RECOVERS HIS KINGDOM—HIS ENDEAVOURS
 TO REGENERATE IT—HIS LOVE FOR RELICS—HIS DISTRIBUTION
 OF HIS REVENUES—HIS PRAYER IN HIS YOUTH—RENEWAL OF
 THE DANISH INVASIONS—DECAY OF FERVOUR—THE LETTER OF
 FORMOSUS—NEW SEES.

It was now the lot of the young and impetuous Alfred to become the leader in this almost unexampled struggle. He had been accustomed to fight side by side with his brother, and therefore shrank not from the contest. His valour, however, could not avert a defeat upon the plains of Wilton. The Danes, on the other hand, paid too dearly for their success to be as yet prepared to reduce him to extremity. A truce was therefore made, and for a few years Wessex remained in comparative repose.

Great as was the promise of ability and goodness in the youthful king, there was in his conduct, a hard-heartedness towards the poor, and a neglect of the administration of justice, that drew upon him the deserved reproof of his kinsman, St. Neot. It was not until he had been purified by misfortune, that he became the model of a Christian ruler, and earned by real holiness of life, as well as by his able and energetic, yet merciful rule, the title of the Great. Before these misfortunes fell upon him, Pope John the Eighth wrote an epistle to Ethelred, or Edered, of Canterbury, that seems, on the one hand, almost prophetic, and, on the other, refers to additional faults in the conduct of Alfred. The Pope praises Ethelred's fervent devotedness to the Holy See; sympathizes with him in the severe trial which the

Church in England was undergoing; assures him that Italy was enduring similar afflictions; reminds him that as "blessed is the man that suffers temptation," and as "God blessed for ever," will not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able, our comfort in Christ ought to be greater when such temptations are greater. Put aside, then, the fear of this world, and, girt with zeal, resist the evil-disposed; feed the people with the nourishment of doctrine, and rule and protect the clergy and religious. "We have taken care," he continues, "to admonish and exhort your king not to neglect to be obedient to you, for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to be your devout helper in all things that may be serviceable to the holy Church committed to you, if indeed he would wish to keep secure that kingdom which for a time is given to him, and afterwards to obtain the life of the eternal kingdom."

"Let not married people," the Pope continued, "separate without cause. If they do so separate, let them not marry again. Let no one transgress the rule of St. Gregory, by marrying relations." Then, as if referring to some complaint from Alfred, the Pope still continued: "Whatever charge against you, by any man whatever, may be brought to us from your own country, we give no credence to it, unless its truth be manifest. But on the very contrary, we admonish your king, that he may render you worthy honour, for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, and may take care both to preserve with lasting stability, and to keep undiminished all the rights of your privilege, if he himself would have the grace and blessing of the Apostolic See, in the same manner as his ancestors, by their good conduct, deserved to have."*

This letter confirms the statement of Asser, that Alfred's relative, St. Neot, the hermit, rebuked the king for his careless administration of justice. The Pope's letter seems to speak of another fault, of

* Wilk. Con. i. p. 195.

groundless charges against the archbishop of Canterbury; and of some invasion of the rights of his see. The misfortunes which were to be, at once, the punishment, and the remedy for these sins, had been foretold by St. Neot, and now fell upon Alfred like a thunderbolt. In the depth of winter, the Danes rushed without a warning into Wessex. Alfred had made no provision for such an attack. Although the treacherous enemy that had sworn peace, was no farther off than Gloucester, while he himself was at Chippenham, he had no army at his beck (A.D. 878). Wessex was, therefore, the prey of the invader, and Alfred was a fugitive in the woods and marshes of Somersetshire.*

Stripped of earthly splendour, and pinched with want, Alfred now understood the emptiness of human grandeur, and the real duties of a king. When, by slow degrees, he had collected an army, and had at last, in pitched battle, overthrown the Danes, he began to display all the qualities of a great ruler. Navies and strong fortresses were built. Laws were made and enforced. Learned men were invited from Mercia, France, and Germany, both to instruct the king himself and to direct the schools which he was about to establish.

His private life was not in contradiction to his public actions: it was a model of devotion and regularity. It was his custom to carry with him wherever he went the "holy relics of many of the elect of God." Before these relics he kept wax candles burning. These candles, six in number, he made, in course of time, of seventy-two ounces of wax, and in such a manner as to divide the day into equal portions, and thus to enable Alfred to regulate exactly both his time of sleep and the duties of each successive day.†

He divided his revenues into two parts: one he gave to his warriors, attendants, workmen, and espe-

* Asser, pp. 480 and 481, ap. Monumenta; Sax. Chron.

† "Est enim sedulus sanctorum locorum visitator etiam ab infantia."

"Ecclesias et reliquias sanctorum orandi causa visitabat, ubique diu prostratus orabat."—Asser, ap. Monumenta, p. 496, &c.

cially to strangers; the other he gave by vow to the schools which he had established, to the poor that came to his gates, no matter of what nation, to the monasteries of Ethelinge and Shaftesbury, which he had built, and when able, to many other monasteries in England, Wales, France, and Ireland.*

All these various duties both of public and private life, he punctually accomplished whilst suffering from severe bodily disease.

When Alfred was still in his early youth, he was assailed by frequent temptations of the flesh. Trembling at the thought of incurring God's displeasure, he arose "very frequently" at the crowing of the cock, and privately "visited the churches and relics of the saints." There remaining long in prostrate supplication, he entreated for some disease which would not render him despicable and unsuited to the duties of his state of life, while its sharpness would strengthen his heart in the service of God. Thus he prayed, and not in vain: a severe disease "fell upon him, and for some years continued to try his patience, until it seemed as if his health must altogether yield." In this state he had gone to Cornwall, on a hunting expedition, when he turned aside into a certain church and besought God to send him some lighter infirmity. The disease, so Asser assures us, speedily left him. For a time he remained in perfect health; and not long after he married a Mercian princess. On the night of the nuptials, in the sight of a crowd of guests, a painful complaint seized him, the very name of which was unknown to his physicians. It was his trial for the rest of his existence, seldom allowing him a day's or even an hour's respite.

Whilst thus suffering, and, at the same time, striving to renovate the energies and institutions of his country, his skill, bravery, and resources were again put to the test, by one of the most active and daring of the sea-kings. The fleet of Hastings was on the Irwell;

* Asser, pp. 495, 496.

† Asser, *De Reb. Ges. Alf.* pp. 484, 485.

and that chief himself was sweeping through the whole country, even to Chester and Snowdonia. Attacked on one side of the island, he was almost in a few hours ravaging the other. He seemed able no less than resolved to plant his followers in the heart of Alfred's dominions. Even when repeatedly checked by Alfred's promptitude, he was able to elude his pursuers, and riot in the spoils of districts hitherto unscathed. Confounded, at last, by the skill and courage of the Christians, he sought and won in France, what he had failed to secure in England. It was not, however, until the three immediate successors of Alfred had fought again and again with the Danes, had erected innumerable fortresses, and had extended their borders to Scotland and Wales, that the Northmen fully submitted, and the country enjoyed uninterrupted repose.

While all were thus directing their attention either to the renovation of learning, or to the more utter overthrow of the Danes, they seemed to have forgotten more than ever their spiritual wants. Asser mentions one fact, which shows clearly how changed was the religious tone of the nation. He tells us that there were still a great number of religious houses in Wessex; but that such a contempt of the religious state had been engendered, either from the wars, or, he says, from the excessive wealth of the men of Wessex, that no freeman could any longer be found to embrace it; nor did those that had already embraced it, live by their rule. What is a worse symptom than even this fact, there appears to have been no systematic effort made to renew the ancient national fervour.

Asser,* indeed, throws no further light upon this interesting subject, having closed his chronicles some

* As this statement of Asser's refers to a time subsequent to Alfred's restoration, and to the principal of the ravages in Wessex, how is it to be reconciled with King Edgar's statement, that the monasteries were entirely destroyed? Simply limiting Edgar's term *Anglia* to its original meaning, the land of the Angles, there is then no difficulty; Wessex being the land of the West Saxons: "*Penitus dejecta in totâ Angliâ erant.*"—Ap. Wilk. Con. i. p. 239.

years before the death of Alfred; but the only remaining contemporary document, a solitary epistle from Pope Formosus, reveals something more startling far, of the desolation of that period.*

“Hearing,” says the Pope, addressing all the bishops of England, “that the atrocious rites of the pagans had revived in your parts, and that you remained silent, like dogs unable to bark, we deliberated upon striking you with the sword of separation from the body of God’s Church.” In consequence, however, of Archbishop Plegmund’s assurances, that now the bishops had aroused themselves, he held back, he says, the edge of punishment, and sent them the blessing of Almighty God, and of blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles. Watch, therefore, against “the lion that goeth about seeking whom he may devour;” and suffer not religion in your country to be again injured, and the flock of God to be dispersed, through a dearth of pastors. As soon as one bishop dies, let another be canonically elected. Let all obey the canonical arrangements of Archbishop Plegmund. Let no one infringe the privileges conceded by our apostolical authority to him and his successors.†

This letter has come to us without a date. Nor has the reply, or any accompanying circumstances, been directly transmitted. Subsequent writers, mistaking either names or dates, or both, have perplexed what was already but darkly known. Referring, it appears, to this very letter, William of Malmesbury gives the following account:—

In 904, therefore, a letter arrived from Pope Formosus, containing sentence of excommunication and anathema against Edward (Alfred’s son and successor), and all his subjects, in place of the blessing which from the see of holy Peter St. Gregory had given to the English nation. Terrified at the message, Edward and Plegmund, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the Witena, or sages, of Wessex took counsel.

* Formosus was Pope from A.D. 891 to 896.

† Ap. Will. of Malm. De Gest. Pont. et ap. Script. x. p. 1751.

The result was, a vote to erect three new sees in the kingdom of Wessex. The archbishop bore to Rome the decision of the council; and by his prompt obedience greatly pleased "the apostolic one." Returning to Canterbury, Plegmund consecrated in one day seven bishops; one for Dorchester, near Oxford; another for the South-Saxons; and five for the five sees in Wessex, which were Winchester, Sherborne, together with the newly-created ones of Crediton, Cornwall, and Wells. All this was ratified by the Pope's sanction (A.D. 904).*

The details of this statement have been questioned. Whether the difficulties are real, the results of the errors of copyists, or only imaginary, arising from our ignorance of almost all the details of that period, it is in vain to discuss: it is enough that such mistakes cannot impugn the substance of the narrative.†

* Will. of Malm. l. ii. De Gest. Reg. sect. 129. Some obscure traces of events which are perhaps connected with these transactions occur in Ethelwerd's Chronicle, l. iv. c. 4. "Pontifex præfatus" (Plegmund) "in ejusdem anni scilicet decursu, pro *populo* Romam qui eleemosynam ducit Edwardo quoque pro rege" (an. 908). Simeon of Durham mentions the fact of seven bishops having been consecrated by Plegmund in one day in the reign of Edward the Elder.—(De Gest. Reg. A.D. 1107.) So also Florence of Worcester: "Septem episcopos septem ecclesiis in una die consecravit" (p. 236, vol. i. Thorpe). See also Will. of Malm. De Gest. Pont. l. ii.; De Episc. Occid. Sax. p. 240, ap. Sav. The diocese of Winchester included Surrey and Hants; Sherborne, before the new arrangement, included Berkshire, Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, Devonshire, and Cornwall.—(Ib. pp. 247 and 248.) Somersetshire was now the diocese of the see of Wells, and Devonshire of that of Crediton. A sixth bishopric was soon after erected—that of Ramsbury, including the whole of Wiltshire; and thus leaving to Sherborne only the counties of Berks and Dorset. (Is William right?)—Gest. Pont. l. ii. p. 248, &c.

† Godwin, therefore, justly adds, that whoever it was that threatened the excommunication, "*Certain it is*, that, forced" by such a sentence, a synod met by royal mandate, &c. (as in Simeon and Will. of Malm.)—Godwin, Præs. p. 49: Synodum, "*coactum illius excommunicationis ratione.*" That some mistakes should have occurred cannot be wondered at; for Eadmer says that he saw this epistle among other records of the church of Canterbury, and that it was so much injured by age, that he could quote no more than a few words.—Ead. Hist. Nov. p. 129.

CHAPTER XXI.

ST. ODO OF CANTERBURY—HIS CONSTITUTIONS—ST. DUNSTAN—HIS
 NUMEROUS MONASTERIES—BANISHED BY EDWY—BECOMES BISHOP
 OF WORCESTER, AND THEN OF LONDON.

FOR some years after the sees were thus again filled, and even increased, darkness again closes over the domestic, and, indeed, over nearly all the most public events of the time. Too certain is it, however, that there were occasional invasions of the Danes from the eastern and northern parts of England. There were for years the movements of hostile armies bearing desolation along their march. There were innumerable sieges, and the sacking of many towns, in the very heart of England, along the frontiers of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Danish kingdoms. The Danes were at last vanquished: Athelstan the Conqueror broke their power, for a time, on the field of Brunanburgh (A.D. 938). His early death, however, revived their courage. They forced Edmund, his brother and successor, to yield them one-half of England; but Anlaff, their leader, dying a few months after, Edmund retrieved his fortunes, and in less than five years closed his career of conquest, amidst the lovely glens of Cumberland, by his crowning victory over Dunmail, the Cumbrian chieftain (A.D. 945).

In such a period, following so closely the invasion of Lodbrog's sons, and that of Hastings, the distress and confusion, and consequent demoralization, may easily be imagined, although it is not expressly recorded.

God, however, was removing the scourge, and was already raising up apostolic men to retrieve discipline, and lead back to holiness. Woe to the nation, if now again it knows not the time of its visitation.

One of the first of the apostolic men sent on this mission of love was St. Odo, "Odo, the good archbishop," as the Saxon Chronicle justly terms him.*

St. Odo was by birth a Northumbrian Dane. His father, being a pagan, punished, and at last disinherited him, for becoming a Christian. Athelm, one of King Alfred's most powerful thanes, became his protector, and placed him under the care of skilful teachers. The young man became thoroughly master of Greek and Latin; he could both write in prose and verse, and pour out his thoughts with ease and fluency in either language.†

After a pilgrimage to Rome, he was ordained priest.

Even while he was as yet only a deacon, he was so well known as a man of God by Alfred the Great and his court, that "almost all the princes of the royal palace had the highest veneration for him, laid open to him the secrets of a life ill spent, and cheerfully submitted to his guidance with regard to future amendment." The esteem with which he was regarded in Alfred's court he preserved under Edward the Elder, and Athelstan the Conqueror. By the joint "election of the king, clergy, and people," and the assent of Wulfhelm of Canterbury, he was raised to the episcopal see of Sherborne.

Having accompanied Athelstan to Northumbria, he witnessed the great battle of Brunanburgh, remaining in prayer with uplifted hands, like another Moses, until the hundred banners of the pagans had been, one after another, torn down, and stricken with terror, the Danes, no less than the Saxons, acknowledged the supremacy of Athelstan "the Conqueror" (A.D. 938).‡

When Athelstan was no more, and his brother

* An. 961.

† "Factus quoque est in utrâque linguâ valde gnarus; ita ut posset poemata fingere, prosam continuare, et omnino quicquid ei animo sederet luculentissimo sermone proferre."—(Vita Sti. Odonis, ap. Whar. ii. p. 79). This life in Wharton's text is ascribed to Osberne, but in reality was written by Eadmer, as Wharton himself acknowledges in his preface, No. 7.

‡ Ang. Sac. ii. p. 80.

Edmund was reigning, the see of Canterbury became vacant. Edmund pressed St. Odo to accept it, but was told by the latter that it would be contrary to the canons to leave his see in exchange for another. The king, however, quoted, amongst other contrary instances, the example of St. Peter, who passed from Antioch to Rome, and of SS. Mellitus and Justus, transferred from London and Rochester to Canterbury. St. Odo, however, was still reluctant: hitherto, he said, the archbishops of Canterbury had all been monks, whereas, he had been but a simple priest before his consecration, and therefore could not think of infringing the ancient custom.* Still, as "many," besides the king, were inviting him to become their bishop, he would not entirely disappoint them; but

* Godwin tells us, that St. Odo obstinately persisted in saying that all the preceding archbishops had been monks; but that Nothelm and some others were secular priests. Now, certainly, there could be no obstinately persisting, when he merely stated something, and no one contradicted it. Then with regard to Nothelm; if the reader will open Godwin's own work (*Præs.* p. 44), he will find that about five lines contain all that is known of him; and these five or six lines merely repeat St. Bede's statement in his Prologue, that Nothelm was a priest of the church of London. Could not a priest be a monk? St. Bede, it must be observed, uses the term "religiosus presbyter," which might signify a priest who was a religious. The church of London was then in the state in which St. Cedd had established it. Now, from the account of St. Bede (*l. iii. c. 25*), St. Cedd's clergy would appear to be monks, as St. Cedd himself had been. When the saint is mentioned as ordaining deacons and priests, it is added, "especially" at Maldon and Tilbury, where he drew together a considerable number of the servants of Christ, and taught them to observe the monastic life. As his deacons and priests at Maldon and Tilbury were monks, is it improbable that those in London were monks? Adding such a probability to the title (in itself ambiguous) of "religiosus," and to the fact stated in St. Bede's Prologue, that Albinus, the abbot of Canterbury, employed Nothelm to convey records and the abbot's own verbal statements to the venerable monk of Jarrow, the probability, it seems to me, becomes exceedingly strong. If, however, there were a real doubt, surely all the sound rules of criticism ought to have allowed the declaration of a learned man like St. Odo, living so near the time of Nothelm, and speaking in presence of those that must have been sufficiently acquainted with the history of Nothelm's church, to have been its real elucidation.

having, in his younger days, desired to become a monk, he would now take the opportunity which he had hitherto sought in vain. Although there was something vague in this reply, the king joyfully received it as a declaration of perfect acquiescence.

The abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Fleury, in Gascony (a place celebrated for its exact observance of rule), being informed of Odo's wish, came to England, together with some of his brethren, and gave him the habit. Being thus bound to poverty and obedience, the holy man, to the astonishment, it may readily be supposed, of the unwary king, refused to accept the archbishopric. He had obtained his heart's desire; he could not, at the very next moment, abandon its long-coveted advantages. His electors, however, were so resolute, that he was, at last, by an importunity little short of compulsion, installed in the archiepiscopal chair.*

Worthy as the new archbishop proved of the choice thus made, and great as are his praises in the national traditions, yet of his deeds but very few are accurately known, and of his writings only one appears to be still extant. This surviving work is a body of "Constitutions," which, "in the name of the Holy Trinity and undivided Divinity," he issued for "the consolation of the king," and "of all the people subject to his excellent rule." Its substance may be reduced to a few words.

The Church, the spouse of Christ, founded in his blood, must be free from oppression and tribute.† Ambrose says: "The Church Catholic is free from all the taxation of the emperor." Let not king or any other person touch its farms and houses.

* Ang. Sax. vol. ii. pp. 81 and 82.

Will. of Malm. De Gest. Pon. l. iii. p. 270, ap. Savile; Vit. Sti. Odonis, ap. Ang. Sac. ii. p. 82.

† Church property at first was liable to the ordinary taxation of the state; but when once it had by special privileges obtained any exemption, it became the bishop's duty to maintain such exemption. The exemptions of the Roman civil code had been generally adopted by the Anglo-Saxon Witena-gemotes.

For Gregory says : " If any one shall have despoiled the Church of Christ, let him be anathema, unless he has repaired the evil by satisfaction."

" We admonish the king, the princes, and all who are in authority, that, with great humility, they obey their archbishops, and all other bishops, because to these are given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the power of binding. Nor let them think much of their having secular power, because God resists the proud, and gives His grace to the humble. Let the king, moreover, have prudent counsellors, fearing God, for the business of the kingdom, in order that the people, being instructed by the example of the king and princes, may derive profit from it to the praise and glory of God. Let the king likewise be the shield and defender of the churches of God. Let him oppress no one unjustly by his power ; let him judge between man and his neighbour without regard to persons ; let him be the protector of strangers, orphans, and widows ; let him prevent theft, and punish adultery ; let him not exalt the unjust ; and let him nourish the poor with alms. Because, although it is necessary for all to keep the commandments of Christ, it is especially so for kings and for all that are placed in high station, who, on the day of severe examination, shall render an account to a just Judge, not only for themselves, but for every one of their subjects."

This exhortation to princes and magistrates was followed by another to the prelates of the Church.

Let bishops preach by good example ; visit their whole diocese once a year, preaching with all diligence. With all boldness, without fear or adulation, let them preach the word of truth to the king, to the princes of his people ; to all dignitaries, and never shrink from the truth. Let them inflict no unjust loss upon any one ; let them excommunicate no one, unless for a just reason.*

During the late destruction of religious houses, some of the monks had acquired a habit of roving,

* Wilk. i. p. 213.

even unnecessarily, from place to place: this abuse was interdicted by St. Odo's Constitutions. Monks were to remain stationary, exercising themselves, according to the example of the Apostles, in humility, in the labour of their hands, in the reading of the Scriptures, and in continual prayer. "Let them, standing ready, with their loins girt, and lamps burning in their hands, await the Father of the family, that he may, at his coming, give them to remain without end in eternal rest."

Some of the nuns required his paternal care, even more than the monks. Compelled, by the destruction of their houses, to intermix with the world, they seem to have quite lost their first fervour, and had even gone so far as to have contracted nominal marriage, forgetting their engagements with the King of Glory. Whilst the nuns had thus degenerated, the laity had reverted to the old northern vice—marriage with near relations. Both these practices were now prohibited, being put under excommunication and anathema.

After these admonitions to peculiar classes, the archbishop closed with an exhortation to all.

Fasting and prayer with alms were to be observed as being "the three wings that guide the saints to Heaven." Observe, then, the fast of Lent, the Ember-days, and the Wednesdays and Fridays. According to the ancient canons, do no secular work on Sundays, or the Festivals of Saints. Beware of vain superstition, with its illusions of magic. Pay your tithes; give alms.*

Such is the substance of St. Odo's Constitutions, which are, everywhere, full of the spirit of a holy and learned bishop. Another man, full of the same spirit, was now coming, from cell and cloister, reluctantly indeed, but yet with generous ardour, to take part in the mission of God's mercy to the Angles. This was St. Dunstan, an Englishman of noble birth. He had been educated by some Irish monks, who had taken up their penitential abode amongst the ruins of Glas-

* Ap. Wilk. i. pp. 212—214.

tonbury Abbey. Being afterwards presented at court, and having remained there in great innocence and fervour, he was falsely accused to King Athelstan of practising magic. This charge either opened his eyes to the vanity of the world, or gave him his wished-for opportunity of abandoning it: he withdrew to his former solitude, and there gave himself to prayer, study, and manual labour. After being ordained priest by his uncle, the bishop of Winchester, he still persevered in his lowly course of life. Men, desirous of securing heaven at any cost, now began to collect around him. A monastery was speedily formed, and was filled to overflowing; and yet other petitioners for the religious habit were still thronging to implore admission.

Rejoicing at this harvest of souls, he now built, out of his own patrimony, five other separate but almost contiguous monasteries. Multitudes embraced the religious life in these houses.

As Glastonbury itself, however, had become, or at least was claimed as the property of the crown, Edmund, the brother and successor of Athelstan, removed all legal difficulties, by freely bestowing it upon St. Dunstan. The latter thus became the first English abbot of Glastonbury; all his predecessors, it would seem, having been either Welsh or Irish.*

* "Primus abbas Anglicæ nationis."—"B," No. 15.) The life of St. Dunstan was written by a contemporary priest, whose initial, "B," alone appears on the MS. It is an unpolished, but trustworthy biography. The writer himself witnessed much of what he relates; the rest he learned from the friends and disciples of St. Dunstan. He wrote it for Alfric, archbishop of Canterbury, who died A.D. 1006.—See the Prologue to his work, and the work itself, p. 37.

From this, from another life which has unfortunately been burnt, and from other sources, Osbern, the precentor of the church of Canterbury and a particular friend of Lanfranc, compiled a life of St. Dunstan, in a style which elicited the commendation of William of Malmesbury.—See Prologue to Osbern's Life of St. Dunstan.

As Hensch justly observes, the feast of St. Dunstan was kept before the time of Canute. St. Elphege of Canterbury, who was martyred 1012, caused the lessons of his office to be arranged.

Under his direction, Glastonbury, and the adjoining monasteries, became one extensive nursery of learning and holiness, where, as his contemporary biographer expresses it, he fed the community with the nourishment of the Divine Word, and gave them to drink of that heavenly fountain—the mellifluous teaching of the sacred Scriptures.

From these monasteries were called forth, after the lapse of a few years, many abbots and bishops, and some archbishops, because, adds the biographer, they were both eminent in sanctity, and most illustrious for wisdom and knowledge.*

About this time it was that Edwy “with a unanimous election by all the chiefs of the English, was anointed and consecrated king.” On the very same day, he left the company of his nobles for that of two ladies, Elfgyva and her daughter, who appear to have been striving to inflame his passions, in order to inveigle him into a marriage with one of them. The absence of a king from his coronation banquet, was a slight upon his electors and guests, and a violation of old custom. The Witenagemote was evidently displeased. Seeing this, St. Odo proposed that deputies should be sent to bring back the king. The chiefs, however, dared not incur the displeasure either of Edwy or of Elfgyva; and, therefore, all eyes were turned to St. Dunstan and the bishop of Lichfield, who were accordingly selected, by the whole Witenagemote, for this unpleasant duty.†

Having punctually and resolutely discharged this commission, St. Dunstan soon felt the weight of the royal vengeance. He was expelled from the king's presence; and, in consequence of Edwy's threat against any that would show him either compassion or hospitality, the holy abbot passed over to Flanders. After being favourably received by the prince of the

* “B,” No. 15; and Osb. Nos. 10—21.

† “Ad extremum vero selegerunt ex omnibus duos, quos animo constantissimos noverant, ut omnium jussui obtemperantes,” &c.—“B,” c. iv. No. 21.

country, he withdrew to St. Peter's monastery at Ghent. The monks "of all England" were made to share his punishment, being stripped of their property and expelled the country.*

The men of Northumbria and Mercia, meantime, weary of Edwy's reliance upon "ignorant" counsellors, shook off his authority, and chose as their king his brother Edgar. Edwy seems to have pined away under this disgrace, not surviving it many months. Edgar, immediately after his accession, had invited St. Dunstan to return to England (A.D. 958). The saint was not, however, reinstated in his possessions, until Edwy's death. Soon after that event, he was made bishop of Worcester, and then of London.†

* Ib. No. 22; Osb. No. 32; Will. of Malm. Gest. Reg. Alban Butler shows that St. Amand's shared with St. Peter's the honour of St. Dunstan's residence.

† "B," c. iv. No. 22.

CHAPTER XXII.

ÆLFSIN'S SIMONY AND DEATH—ST. DUNSTAN, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY—DEGENERACY OF ALL CLASSES—ST. DUNSTAN'S EFFORTS AND DIFFICULTIES—ST. OSWALD—ST. ETHELWALD—THE MONASTERIES OF RAMSEY, ABINGDON, ELY, AND PETERBOROUGH REBUILT—EDGAR'S DEATH—ATTEMPT OF SOME DISPOSSESSED CLERGY TO RECOVER THEIR FORMER LIVINGS BY FORCE—ST. ELPHEGE—HIS LOVE OF PENANCE—PREDICTION AND DEATH OF ST. DUNSTAN.

THE see of Canterbury was now vacant, by the death of St. Odo. As long as the metropolitan see is filled by a good pastor, the evils of the time, however rampant, are under some restraint. When such a restraint had been removed by Odo's death, those evils invaded even the very see by which they had been so firmly repressed. The monks to whom belonged the election of the new bishop, were not exempt from the degeneracy of the period. A majority amongst them did not hesitate to incur the frightful crime of simony by selling their votes. The man whose sacrilegious bribery had thus procured his election, was named Ælfsin. He was soon overtaken by the judgments of God. He was hastening to Rome for the pallium, when he perished with cold amongst the snows of Switzerland. A new election being made, another, though a mitigated, evil appeared. Byrhtelm, the new archbishop elect, was a man not only mild but so spiritless, that he could not find it in his heart to curb and chastise the disobedient. This being evident from only a few days' ministration of his diocese, the king (by a zeal which was not according to knowledge) bade him return home. He obeyed. After two such elections the monks might well be circumspect. Their choice proved that they had profited by experience: they elected St. Dunstan.

The latter addressed himself unsparingly to his new duties. His journey to Rome was promptly accomplished;* the holy places were visited; the poor were relieved; and St. Dunstan again gladdened the English with his presence and increasing labours. His first acts after his return were to consecrate St. Oswald, to found a monastery at Westminster, and to reinstate the monks of Abingdon and Glastonbury. Various religious buildings that lay in ruins, the tokens of Danish ravages, were re-erected; and others repaired or enriched. Temporal affairs did not destroy the saint's inward recollection, or interfere with his various spiritual duties. Vigils by night, in prayer, or in study; and, by day, the ordination of priests, and the consecration of churches and altars, besides his private devotions and deeds of charity, were his delight and constant employment.†

All this toil, however, was very trifling, if compared with that of the renovation of discipline. To lift up one's voice against the world is, humanly speaking, a thankless task; but to enforce the rules of Christian life, not in the poor, but those who ought to be an example to others, the nobles and clergy; to wrestle to the death with the darling vices of a thoroughly corrupted age; this was an undertaking beyond the strength of St. Odo, and scarcely to be accomplished even by the energy of St. Dunstan.

The ravages and triumphs of the pagans about seventy years before, followed by sanguinary struggles, and then, in the centre and north of the country, by long wars, had acted fearfully on the religious, no less than on the civil relations of society. Perjury, forging the coinage, theft, poisonings, adultery, and open violence, everywhere prevailed. In too many places, unfortunately, the clergy, ill trained, through the confusion of the times, were little better, and sometimes

* "B," c. v.; and Osb. c. vii. No. 40, &c. ap. Boll. "*Itinera quæ summis sunt sacerdotibus solita, Romanum prospero calle tetendit ad urbem*," &c.—"B," v. 27.

† "B," No. 37, ap. Boll.

seemed even worse, than the laity. Some of them, instead of being eaten up with the zeal of souls, were devoted to sordid gain, or to the chase, or to vicious pleasures.

To evils so grievous, and yet so general, St. Dunstan strove to apply an immediate remedy. Empowered by the Holy See, and supported by the decrees of a recent synod, and by Edgar's zealous co-operation, he visited all parts of his extensive province, restoring order among the laity, and either inducing the clergy to live according to the canons, or compelling them to leave the churches which their forbidden marriages or other evil conduct had too long disgraced. It was necessary, of course, to find successors more worthy of their vocation. Few of this stamp, unfortunately, were to be found among the secular clergy. It was, therefore, to those monasteries which strictly adhered to their rules, that St. Dunstan now applied. The zeal of those to whom he appealed, readily supported his noble purpose; and when the monks thus sent had been installed, a change was soon discernible. Nor did the ejection of many produce any scarcity of priests. Zealous men, some of them from even the highest classes and of the greatest power, renounced their prospects in the world, to labour for Christ in the ecclesiastical state.*

Such a change could not have been effected without many trials. Of these but few are known; yet one will be sufficient to afford an idea of the unflinching

* Osbern, Nos. 43 and 44, ap. Boll. There is an incidental allusion to this reform by St. Wulstan, one of St. Oswald's successors in the see of Worcester, and the last survivor of those Anglo-Saxon bishops that were consecrated before the Norman conquest (he was born about A.D. 1008, and died 1095): "*Opitulatione Edgari Regis et auctoritate pii patris Dunstani, Cantuariensis archiepiscopi, de irregulari conversatione clericorum in regularem conversationem et habitum monachorum transtulit,*" &c.—(See St. Wulstan's Account of one of his Diocesan Synods, ap. Wilk. i. 369.) In another place, we find him expressly declaring what he meant by their being irregular; and shocking indeed is the testimony he is forced to render: "*Repudiantes uxores quas illicite duxerant, et alias accipientes; gulæ et ebrietati jugiter dediti.*" (See also note, p. 214.)

determination necessary in such a cause. A powerful ealdorman had married a lady within the forbidden degrees of kindred. Three times he was reproved by St. Dunstan, but persisting in his refusal to separate, was forbidden the church.

The ealdorman complained to the king of what he called the archbishop's immoderate and impious severity, and begged to be set free from St. Dunstan's tyranny by the royal sanction. Edgar assented, and forgetting the limits of his office, commanded St. Dunstan to leave the nobleman at peace, and to give him free admittance to the church.

St. Dunstan was grieved that the king had thus, even without examination, chosen to decide; but he was no less firm. Instead of heeding the king's orders, he placed the ealdorman under the more stringent sentence of a formal excommunication. The nobleman became furious at so unexpected a result. He despatched messengers to Rome, bought the advocacy of several Romans, and deceiving the Pope by their means, obtained an apostolical mandate to be released from the sentence.

St. Dunstan, however, knew that the Pope had been imposed upon; and therefore sent word to the triumphant ealdorman that the Pope's letters would be obeyed, when he himself submitted to do penance. The ealdorman was confounded; and moved by grace, began to tremble. "He thought," says Osbern, "of the judgments which oftentimes fall upon rebellious men like himself." Such thoughts, added to the disgrace with his countrymen in which he found himself involved, and his certainty that the archbishop would remain firm, shook, and at last subdued his obstinacy.

It so happened that a council was now deliberating upon the state of ecclesiastical discipline. Before this assembly, the penitent ealdorman presented himself. He had already dismissed his forbidden partner, and had submitted to the penance enjoined him; and now, having exchanged his robes of silk and gold for a

woollen dress, barefooted, and holding rods in his hands, he advanced, and threw himself at the archbishop's feet. All were moved with pity; and at the entreaty of the assembled fathers, St. Dunstan, mingling his tears with those of the penitent, gave him the desired absolution.

St. Dunstan's efforts were now ably supported by two holy and learned bishops, St. Oswald and St. Ethelwold. To these zealous men Edgar, at the request of the archbishop, gave all the authority of the state to enforce the ecclesiastical law of celibacy.*

St. Oswald was St. Odo's nephew. Becoming a canon of Winchester, he feared not to show himself an exception to his brethren in his love of rule. He had not yet received even minor orders, when he was appointed dean. Being greatly loved by the canons, he exerted his influence to persuade them (as we are assured in Eadmer's Life) to conform to their ancient rule. Failing in this, he obtained the permission of his uncle, the bishop, and renounced the office of dean of Winchester, to become a monk of Fleury, in Gascony. Being consecrated bishop of Worcester, he laboured strenuously to excite a fervent spirit in his clergy. Different as they were from the clerks of St. Egwin, yet, at the call of their bishop, some of them at once shook off their lethargy. St. Oswald, with the assistance of the ealdorman Aylwin, was now founding the abbey of Ramsey. This he peopled with twelve of the secular canons of Worcester, who had voluntarily embraced the monastic life. To the remaining canons he gave the offer, which he at once enforced, either to renounce their prebends, or receive the religious habit. His next object was to revive a zeal for learning. For this purpose, he secured for

* "Qui rex, ipsius patris consilio utens, curam exequendi decreti hujus super totum regnum duobus viris injunxit, Oswaldo, scilicet, episcopo Wigornensi, et Athelwoldo Wintoniensi."—Ead. de Vit. Sti. Osw., Whart. ii. p. 200, Osb. No. 44, &c.

the community of Ramsey, the instructions of Abbo, a monk of Fleury, famous for learning and holiness.* Whilst thus occupied, Oswald was chosen archbishop of York. His monastery at Worcester, if resigned so soon after its establishment, could hardly be expected to survive: he, therefore, kept both the bishoprics.† As he does not appear to have attempted any changes in the north, we may infer that the clergy in that part of the country were less in need of reform than their brethren of the south.

St. Ethelwold, the partner of St. Dunstan and St. Oswald in the work of renovation, was born of noble parents, and after some stay at court, was brought up under the care of Elphege, a saintly bishop of Winchester. He was ordained priest along with St. Dunstan. When the latter had become abbot of Glastonbury, St. Ethelwold put himself under his direction as a simple monk, studying the classics and the Christian writers, and subjecting himself to all the varied and wholesome discipline of the monastic life. To learn this discipline the more perfectly, he was on the point of leaving England, when King Edred, with the consent of St. Dunstan, gave him the ruined monastery of Abingdon. He had already reconstructed this monastery, and was earnestly enkindling the fervour of his little community, when he was chosen and consecrated bishop of Winchester (Nov. 29th, A.D. 963).‡

His proceedings as bishop are thus narrated in a brief and homely style, by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle :

* Hist. Rams. pars i. written by a monk of that house, who seems, from the end of his work, to have lived after the Conquest.

† "Breaking the letter of the canons, but being excused by necessity," says William of Malmesbury; or would it not rather seem, by mistake: what *necessity*, as we are not told of any, for his becoming archbishop of York? For the abuses that followed this precedent see Will. of Malm. 271. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that if he retained the direction of the monks, he would also be compelled to retain the bishopric; the bishop and abbot, wherever monks formed the cathedral chapter, being one and the same person.

‡ Vita Sti. Ethelw. ap. Mab. Act. Sti. Ben. sæc. v. Nos. 1—14, p. 597, &c. The author was a contemporary (see his præf.).

“He drove out the clergy of the bishopric, because they would hold no rule, and set monks therein.* He made there two abbasies, one of monks, another of nuns. That was all within Winchester. Then came he afterwards to King Edgar, and requested that he would give him all the minsters that heathen men had before destroyed; for that he would renew them. This the king cheerfully granted; and the bishop came then first to Ely, where St. Etheldritha lies, and ordered the minster to be repaired; which he gave to a monk of his, whose name was Brithnoth, whom he consecrated abbot; and there he set monks to serve God, where formerly were nuns. He then bought many villages of the king, and made it very rich. Afterwards came Bishop Athelwold to the minster called Medhamsted, which was formerly ruined by heathen folk; but he found there nothing but old walls, and wild woods. In the old walls at length he found hid writings, which Abbot Hedda had formerly written;—how King Wulfhere and Ethelred his brother had wrought it, and how they freed it against king and against bishop, and against all worldly service; and how Pope Agatho confirmed it with his writ, as also Archbishop Deusdedit. He then ordered the minster to be rebuilt; and set there an abbot who was called Aldulf; and made monks where before was nothing. He then came to the king, and let him look at the writings which before were found; and the king then answered and said: ‘I, Edgar, grant and give to-day, before God and before Archbishop Dunstan, freedom to St. Peter’s Minster at Medhamsted, from king and from bishop.’ Then answered Dunstan, the archbishop of Canterbury, and said: ‘I grant, that all the things which are here given and spoken, and all the things that thy prede-

* The contemporary life in Mabillon (No. 16) describes them as lost to all sense of shame. “They dwelt, indeed, in the old monastery, in which was the episcopal see;” but they not only lived without rule, but were abandoned to gluttony and drunkenness; and had married, and then repudiated their pretended wives to marry others.

cessors and mine have given, shall remain firm.' (A.D. 972)" *

The expelled clergy were, meantime, exciting their friends to reinstate them in their former possessions. Church property is set aside for church purposes: for the offering of the sacrifice, the administration of the sacraments, and the general work of the salvation of souls. The labourer is, indeed, worthy of his hire; but when he ceases to labour, his hire ceases. If he not only ceases to labour, but destroys the labours of others, he must, at least, be removed. Thus had it been with the Anglo-Saxon clergy, who refused to listen either to the ancient canons, or to the recent decrees of their own bishops. Men so perverse, were not likely to yield a ready submission. Although punished by ejection, they had been allowed a sufficient maintenance; but even this considerate treatment was far from satisfying them. They murmured; they complained of the hardship of their case. They made use of every art to excite sympathy. Those men of the world, who had been coerced without being really converted by the measures of St. Dunstan, were likely enough to become the patrons of men, whose code of discipline would be sufficiently lax and pliable. As soon, therefore, as Edgar died, there was a general commotion (A.D. 975). A political crisis opened unexpected facilities to the plans of the discontented. The nobles, for some time, could come to no agreement in the choice of Edgar's successor. The majority leaned to Edward the Martyr, then a boy of twelve; while others were for Ethelred, a boy of scarcely seven. The latter, influenced we are told by money, declared for the expelled clergy. At the head of this party, stood Elfrede, the king of Mercia. This ruler assembled his partisans and fighting men, destroyed the monasteries built by St. Ethelwold, and put the clergy in possession of their former livings.

Indignant at these outrages, several noblemen took

* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. See also Hist. Eliens. and the life in Mabillon.

up arms in favour of the monks. The ealdorman Brithnoth, amongst others, and the ealdorman Ailwin, and his brother Elfwold, assembled their men, and repelled the assailants. Throughout East Anglia, therefore, the tumult ceased, and the monks remained unmolested.*

In other places, likewise, tranquillity was speedily restored. The chiefs had agreed upon the choice of Edward the Martyr, and, forsaken now by their political supporters, the clergy were forced to submit to a solemn decree, issued by a synod of Winchester, and afterwards by a synod at Calne, in confirmation of their expulsion (A.D. 975).†

After the decease of St. Ethelwold (Aug. 1, A.D. 984), some of the dispossessed, or their sons, who had succeeded to their livings, made another effort. The monks, being now the cathedral chapter, assembled to choose the new bishop. Some of their opponents, acting as if they were still the legitimate chapter, assembled for the same purpose. St. Dunstan immediately interposed; and that so strenuously, that St. Elfege, the first abbot of Bath, was unanimously chosen. This saint, leaving his inheritance and his mother, whom he greatly loved, became a monk in the monastery of Deerhurst, in Gloucestershire, and afterwards a recluse, near the hot springs at Bath. As many nobles flocked to him for advice and succour,

* Hist. Rames. pars ii. c. 37 and 38; Sim Dun. De Gest. Reg. an. 975.

† The synod at Winchester is said to have been terminated by a voice issuing from a crucifix which was used at the time as a pix for the Blessed Sacrament. Brompton says, that in memory of this miracle, the following inscription had been written over the crucifix, and was still there when he wrote his Chronicle (about A.D. 1350):—

“Humano more crux præsens edidit ore
Cœlitus affata quæ perspicis hîc suberata.”

Ap. Dec. Scrip. p. 870.

There is a very great discrepancy, apparently, in the facts and exact dates of this part of the century. The real sequence of some events it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain. See also upon this confusion Duffus Hardy's note to Will. of Malm. i. sect. 161; and Ling. note to Anglo-Sax. Antiq. (Syn. of Calne) p. 301; 1845.

and as some joined him in his penitential life, his cell was quickly enlarged into a monastery.

He thought it an execrable abuse, says his biographer, that man should use for his own purposes the property which by nature is common to all.* If one limb suffers, he used to say, all the body suffers. We are all limbs or members of Christ's mystical body: shame would it be if we were surpassed by Jews or pagans in our love of our fellow-members. By such exhortations as these, and still more, undoubtedly, by his own example, he so inflamed the rich with this brotherly love, that utter poverty became unknown throughout his diocese. Remarkable as was his charity, equally remarkable was his love of penance. Nor were the practices emanating from such a love at all diminished by his elevation to the see of Winchester. Often in the winter nights, when the earth was bound up with frost, he would leave his bed, and steal out into the open air, with bare feet, and but one garment; and standing thus in the cold until daybreak, would temper the affliction of his body with the fervent outpourings of his soul to God. Frequently, too, he arose from table without having tasted food. It is scarcely to be wondered at that he was wasted to mere skin and bone: the palms of his hands are said to have become perfectly transparent.†

When he had been bishop of Winchester four years, St. Dunstan passed to his reward. This great bishop, some years before his death, had foretold, without stating the exact time, that almost the whole of the

* "*Sane veritatem rerum ita polliceor ut nulla me sublato si quis infuerit splendore verborum, dicturum profitear quæ non aut ab iis qui viderunt, aut a videntibus audierunt, acceperim, et eis fide simul et auctoritate plurimum præstantibus.*"—Osbern's Prologue, ap. Whar. p. 122.

Osbern, Vita Sti. Elph. ap. Whar. ii. p. 128; and also in Mab. sæc. 6. "*Immane horrendumque nefas reputans, si quod natura commune instituit, hoc velit homo usurpare privatim,*" &c. "*In eadem provinciâ nemo egenus remansit,*" &c.—Ib.

† Osbern, Vit. Sti. Elph. ap. Whar. ii. pp. 122—126.

nobility of England would, like sheep without a shepherd, go astray from the way of truth.* St. Oswald survived until 992. About eighteen years after St. Dunstan's decease, St. Elphege was elected as his fourth successor in the archiepiscopal throne (A.D. 1005). Returning from Rome with the pallium, he held many successive councils, and was discharging all the duties of a good shepherd, when his labours were interrupted, and his own life terminated by the renewed invasions of the Danes.†

* "B," Vita Sti. Dust. c. vi. No. 32.

† Ap. Wilk. i. pp. 293, 294; and Whar. ii. note p. 129, &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.

REAPPEARANCE OF THE DANES—GENERAL DESOLATION—CHARITY
AND ZEAL OF ST. ELPHEGE—SACK OF CANTERBURY—MARTYRDOM
OF THE ARCHBISHOP—ST. WALSTAN.

FOR nearly forty years, the Danes had dreaded and avoided the coasts of England. At last, when Edward the Martyr had been murdered, and Ethelred the Unready was seated upon the English throne, the Scandinavians, knowing, it would seem, the sovereign's character, began again their work of destruction. Ethelred at last vented his unmanly rage upon some of the unsuspecting Danes, who had long been resident in the country. The innocent and the guilty; those who had remained faithful to their rulers, and those who joined in their countrymen's ravages, were all alike involved in the massacre of St. Brice (Nov. 13th, 1002). This iniquitous measure drew down its own punishment. Vengeance, no less than plunder, was now the object. The fields were laid waste; the villages and open towns were burnt; and the prisoners were tortured and put to death.

The Danes were led by Thurkil and King Swegen or Sweyn. When their thirst of blood had somewhat abated, they were appeased with money. Thus was it that Abingdon and some other monasteries escaped; but only by paying a heavy ransom. Thanks to the prudence that had fenced many of the towns with strong ramparts, there was still some respite for the crowds of fugitives. Famine and pestilence, however, soon fell upon the whole country. The courts of law were closed. The hand of the strong was almost the only authority. Man sold man into slavery; and

even fathers bought their bread at the price of their own children.*

In the midst of the confusion and horror of this frightful war, St. Elphege courageously exposed his life for his flock. He went in person into a Danish camp in the neighbourhood of Canterbury, to treat again and again for the ransom of prisoners. Whilst thus engaged, he took every opportunity of preaching to the savage invaders, and with such success, that the pagans began to fear that the loss of so many comrades would force them to abandon their career of blood and pillage. Their reception, therefore, of the archbishop was henceforth rude and derisive in the extreme. He was not, however, to be thus deterred. "Preferring to be called Beelzebub with his Lord, rather than Rabbi with the Pharisee," St. Elphege continued, with patience and zeal, his apostolical labours. He was ripe for the crown of martyrdom.*

King Ethelred had intrusted the government of the whole kingdom to Edric, a man of low birth, who had risen, by eloquence and craftiness, to great riches and power. This Edric's brother being slain, while making an attack upon some of the chief men of Canterbury, Edric presented himself before Ethelred, and demanded vengeance. The reply was, that his brother had deserved his death. Edric withdrew, pale with half-suppressed passion. He soon collected a band of ten thousand followers, and set upon the slayers of his brother. These, however, were on their guard, and repelled his assault. His fury now drowned every other consideration: he hurried to the Danes. He was received with open arms, and it was agreed that, after mastering their common enemy, they should divide England between them, the Eastern counties being Edric's share.

The bargain being struck, the Danes, who were arranging their winter-quarters near London, embarked in their numerous vessels, and soon arrived at

* Will. of Malm.; Hist. Abend. Whart. i. p. 167; Sax. Chron.

Sandwich.* There they were joined by the traitor, and a numerous array of infantry.

They soon closed around the archiepiscopal city, some striving to batter down the walls, others, under the shelter of pent-houses, endeavouring to sap them, and many on moveable turrets, hurling darts and fire upon the ramparts, and the roofs of the houses beyond. Not many days passed before a large portion of the city was wrapped in conflagration. As the defenders left the walls, to save their families, the assailants rushed in, and with yells, and wild barbaric music, fell to the work of blood and spoil.

St. Elphege was in St. Saviour's Church, surrounded by the terrified monks. Before the arrival of the enemy, he had been urged to leave the city, but had refused. The discordant sounds that were now ringing from all the neighbourhood were too much for his compassionate heart. He slipped away from the kind hands that would have detained him, and rushed into the streets. What a sight met his view! heaps of blood-stained corpses; matrons dragged by the hair of the head; men hung up and writhing in torture; little children torn from their mothers' breasts, and tossed upon the points of lances, or crushed to atoms by waggon-wheels. The bishop seemed beside himself with grief and horror: "Spare, spare," he cried, "it is no victory to massacre children at the breast. Turn your weapons upon me, who have deprived you of many of your soldiers by making them Christians, who have redeemed from you many of your captives." Uttering such expressions, he plunged into the thickest of the enemy. He was seized almost immediately by the throat, and, while some chained his hands, others lacerated his face with their nails, or kicked and struck him, and thrust him forward to the cathedral, to witness the slaughter of his monks.

* Osb. p. 133. Sandwich was then an excellent port: now its harbour is choked with sand, and the coast has been so enlarged by the upheavings of the German Ocean, that Sandwich itself is two miles from the sea.

When all was over, St. Elphege, bleeding copiously from a severe wound in his shoulder, was put into a boat, carried up the river to Greenwich, and cast into a loathsome dungeon. He there remained for seven months. As, however, he refused to ransom himself at the expense of his afflicted church, he was at last, after many sufferings, carried into the banqueting-room of the Danish chiefs. "Gold, bishop," they fiercely cried, as he approached, "or this very day you will become a sight to the world."

For some moments St. Elphege was silent: he was too faint to speak. Recovering breath a little, he exclaimed: "The gold of Divine wisdom I offer you, to the end that, abandoning the vanity which you love, you may serve the one, the living, the true and eternal God. If, however, with obstinate minds, you despise the counsel of God announced by me, you will perish with a fate worse than that of Sodom, and shall not take root for ever in this land."

Carousing on the wine which they had brought from the South, they were too much intoxicated, it seems, to interrupt him at once; but now they understood enough to leap in fury from their seats; and dealing weak blows with their battle-axes, while reeling about, or, if unable to strike, at least hurling stones and the bones of oxen, they gradually brought their unresisting victim to the verge of death.*

At their first assault, sinking upon one knee, the holy bishop exclaimed: "O Lord Jesus, only begotten Son of the Father Most High, who, through the womb of a spotless virgin, camest into this world to save sinners, both receive me in peace, and have mercy on these." Being now laid prostrate upon the ground, he yet rose once more, exclaiming, "O good Shepherd, O Shepherd unparalleled, defend the sons of the Church, whom dying I commend to your protection."

One of the Danes, who had been received by him at the baptismal font, seeing how long his agony was

* Compare Osb. with Sax. Chron. an. 1011, 1012, and Ead. Hist. Nov. p. 4, Seld.

protracted, ran up to him, and, from an impulse of mistaken pity, drove his battle-axe into the martyr's brain. "His holy blood fell on the earth," says the Saxon Chronicle, "while his sacred soul was sent to the realm of God" (April 19th, A.D. 1012).*

The Danish chiefs ordered his dead body to be flung into the river; but the Christian Danes, ready armed for battle, interposed. They gained their point.† It was borne in triumph into London, and placed with great honour in St. Paul's Cathedral; "where," says the Saxon Chronicle (evidently a contemporary history), "God now showeth this holy martyr's miracles." In the reign of Canute, about twelve years after the sack of Canterbury, it was translated to the cathedral of that city. "Archbishop Ethelnoth, and Bishop Elfsy,

* Compare Osb. with Sax. Chron. an. 1011, 1012.

† Osbern says that the Christian and Pagan Danes agreed to fix an ashen stick in the ground, and if it put forth during the night, to allow the body to be honourably buried as that of a just man; but if it did not, to cast it, if it so pleased the Pagans, into the river. In the morning the dry ashen stick had put forth leaves. Many of the Pagan chiefs immediately became Christians. This account has not been inserted in the text, because I cannot learn the source from which Osbern received it; and also because, from the fulness of his narrative, and the swelling tone of his style (occasionally rising almost to a triumphant pæan), I fear that he could not always have been sufficiently cautious.

Wharton, the editor of the *Anglia Sacra* (in note to p. 134, vol. ii.), has insinuated that Osbern, the writer of the life of St. Elphege, or (as Wharton here mistakenly terms him) Eadmer, invented, out of his own brain, that portion of the biography which refers to the conversion of the Danes, in order to secure for him a plausible title to the crown of martyrdom. His reasons are thus stated by himself:—

"For Lanfranc, at whose command Osbern compiled the life of Elphege, said that Elphege was not, properly speaking, a martyr," &c. This denial on the part of Lanfranc was so well known, says Wharton, that it made Eadmer look about for a better reason; "Eadmer *therefore*," &c.

What would the reader think, if he were to discover that what is called a denial was only an expression of doubt; and that even this was retracted in the very same conversation in which it was made? Yet so it is; as the reader will find if he turns over a few leaves in Wharton's own volume (*Ang. Sac. ii. p. 162*). A translation of the same he will find inserted in this History (see St. Anselm).

and Bishop Britwine, and all they that were with them, lodged the holy corpse of St. Elphege on the north side of the altar of Christ; to the praise of God, and to the glory of the holy archbishop, and to the everlasting salvation of all those who there his holy body daily seek, with earnest heart and all humility. May God Almighty have mercy on all Christian men through the intercession of Elphege!" *

Four years after the martyrdom of St. Elphege, another great servant of God passed to his reward. This was the humble St. Walstan. Born of a noble family, in Norfolk, he renounced both wealth and station, by distributing his patrimony amongst the poor, and becoming a day-labourer. He added fasts to his toils; is said to have worked many miracles, and died in the fields, in the midst of his humble labours, in the year 1016. His name is still a household word in Norfolk.

* Sax. Chron. A.D. 1023.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CANUTE—EDWARD THE CONFESSOR—FACTIONS OF THE NOBLES—
NATIONAL MISFORTUNES—MOURNFUL STATE OF THE CHURCH OF
THE ENGLISH—MISCONDUCT AND PUNISHMENT OF SEVERAL
PRELATES—LEGATES—ST. WULSTAN OF WORCESTER—HIS ELO-
QUENCE AND FAME AS A CONFESSOR—HIS CONTEST WITH ALDRED
OF YORK.

THE wars that desolated the country under Ethelred, had terminated in the triumph of Sweyn. As this monarch died in the course of a twelvemonth, Ethelred returned to England and reigned as ingloriously as ever. The Danish war was renewed, and on the death of Ethelred and his valiant son, Edmund Ironside, Canute, the son of Sweyn, sat on the English, as well as on the Scandinavian, throne (A.D. 1017). He ruled for nearly twenty years, and during a considerable part of that time, endeavoured, by his impartial administration of justice, and by his zealous support of the Church, to heal the wounds which he and his countrymen had inflicted. The brief reigns of his two successors were followed by the election of Edward the Confessor, the eldest surviving son of Ethelred the Unready (A.D. 1042).

To enforce the ancient laws, to promote the peace and general welfare of his subjects, and to aid the renovation of discipline, were the objects of St. Edward's incessant prayers and exertions. As, however, the chief power and nearly all the land of the country were now held by a divided oligarchy, his efforts were necessarily turned from his darling objects to the balancing of parties, the quelling of faction, and the averting of the repeatedly imminent danger of a civil war.

When the Danes no longer approached his dominions, and when the voice of internal discord was hushed,

there was still no lengthened period of tranquillity: the king's attention was engrossed by new calamities. The seasons were often unpropitious; hurricanes of unprecedented violence swept the country, levelling alike the cottage and the forest; and plague and famine were still brooding over the ruins of war.

Evils of such a character required an immediate remedy. By the abolition of the productive tax known as the Dane-gelt, and by great personal acts of charity, St. Edward strove to mitigate the afflictions of his people. Wise laws and a firm but temperate execution of justice were not wanting. Long did the English cherish a grateful remembrance of St. Edward's paternal rule. When oppressed by the Norman yoke, their petition to the crown was always the same: "Give us," they cried, the "laws of the good king Edward."*

One of the last acts of this father of his people, was the erection of Westminster Abbey. He had made a vow to go on pilgrimage to the tombs of the Apostles. As, however, his absence would expose the country to fresh troubles, the Pope commuted the vow: the money necessary for the pilgrimage was to be given to the poor, and a monastery was to be built or repaired, and endowed, in honour of St. Peter; and "to be subject to no lay person except the king." St. Edward selected, therefore, and rebuilt, the monastery of Thorny, afterwards better known as Westminster. No taxes were levied for this magnificent structure. On this, as on all other occasions, the king limited his expenses according to the income of his own personal estates. He died soon after the consecration of the abbey church (Jan. 5, 1066).†

* Comp. Sax. Chron., Ailred de Vita et Mir. Edw. Confes., Will. of Malm. De Gest. Reg., &c. The last Danish landing of any importance appears to have been upon the coasts of Kent and Essex in 1046. The Danes were driven back to their ships. This was two hundred and fifty years from the first sack of Lindisfarne.

† "Here Edward king,
of Angles lord,
sent his sooth-fast
soul to Christ,

in God's protection,
spirit holy.
He in the world here
dwelt awhile

As the men whose youth was passed during the Danish wars, were now the elders of the people, it cannot surprise the reflecting mind, that such men's lives were the very opposite of that of their good king Edward. There were, indeed, zealous servants of God in all classes; but in too many there was a half-pagan spirit, that fostered gluttony, and drunkenness, and impurity; that sought its lawless gain in the sale of Christians, and even of pregnant women, into slavery; and that urged on princes, and even some bishops, to afflict the Church by usurpation and simony.*

We find, for example, that on the death of a bishop of Durham, Edred, the chief of the Durham clergy, took the money of the church, and bought from King Hardicanute, nothing less than the bishopric itself. The poor wretch, before he was able to sit upon the episcopal throne, was overtaken by a judgment more striking than even that of Ælfsin of Canterbury. He was on the very point of entering the church, when he was struck by a sudden disease, and being carried home, never again rose from his bed (A.D. 1042).

Egelric was the next candidate for the bishopric. Being a foreigner, he failed to secure the votes of the clergy. Such, however, was the confusion of the time, that he was, notwithstanding this, consecrated and enthroned. Three years after, being expelled from the church by the clergy, he hurried to Siward, the new earl of Northumbria; and, accompanying a plausible story with presents, was forcibly restored. He afterwards resigned the bishopric to his brother Egel-

in royal majesty,
mighty in council.
Aye was blithe-minded
the bale-less king.
Chaste and mild,
Edward the noble.
The realm he guarded,
land and people,

until suddenly came
death the bitter,
and so dear a one seized.
This noble from earth
angels carried,
sooth-fast soul,
into heaven's light."

Anglo-Sax. Chron. 1065, ap. Mon.

* See William of Malmesbury's account of the manners of the English—De Gest. Reg. l. iii. sect. 245.

wine. In the reign of the Conqueror, he was charged with having appropriated the monies of the bishopric. Refusing to give an account of their application, he was imprisoned. His brother was outlawed.*

The two following extracts from the Saxon Chronicle tell but too plainly their own unhappy tale:—

“This year came Archbishop Robert hither, over sea, with his pall from Rome, one day before St. Peter’s eve: and he took his archiepiscopal seat at Christchurch, on St. Peter’s day, and soon after this went to the king. Then came Abbot Sparhawk to him with the king’s writ and seal, to the intent that he should consecrate him bishop of London; but the archbishop refused, saying that the Pope had forbidden him. Then went the abbot to the archbishop for the same purpose, and there demanded episcopal consecration; but the archbishop persisted in his refusal, repeating that the Pope had forbidden him. Then went the abbot to London, and sat at the bishopric which the king had before given him, with his full leave, all the summer and the autumn.” He was then expelled.†

Contemporary with this unworthy abbot was Leofgar, a still more unworthy bishop, of whom the Saxon Chronicle gives the following brief but significant account:—

“The worthy bishop Athelstan died on the fourth before the ides of February; and his body lies at Hereford. To him succeeded Leofgar, who was Earl Harold’s mass-priest. He wore his knapsack in his priesthood, until he was a bishop. He abandoned his chrism and his rood,—his ghostly weapons,—and took to his spear and to his sword, after his bishophood; and so marched to the field against Griffin the Welsh king. But he was there slain, and his priests with him, and Elnoth the sheriff, and many other good men with them; and the rest fled.”‡

About five years after this signal punishment,

* Sim. Hist. Dunel. Eccl. l. iii. c. 9; Sax. Chron. A.D. 1069.

† Sax. Chron. A.D. 1051.

‡ Sax. Chron. A.D. 1056.

Aldred of Worcester was elected to the vacant see of York. According to custom, he went to Rome for the pallium; but having no intention of resigning Worcester, took care to be accompanied by the powerful Earl Tostig, the brother of Harold, and afterwards his competitor for the crown. The general ignorance of the English at that time, and the example of his predecessor, may be pleaded in his excuse; yet as he demanded what in reality would be a serious breach of the canons, and was not, of course, to be dispensed with without a strong reason, Pope Nicholas could not tolerate such an abuse. It was to no purpose that Tostig's influence was now exerted: the Pope was resolute. They at last left the Holy City in anger. The earl, a mere man of the world, and utterly ignorant of ecclesiastical matters, did not refrain from threats, declaring, that having failed to carry his point, the annual offerings of the English to the Pope should cease. He forgot that what was freely given was freely taken, and that the things of the Church and of God were no more to be bought in his time, than in the days of St. Peter and Simon Magus. Journeying along in this sullen mood, they were beset by robbers; and by a just judgment of God, were stripped of the miserable gold with which they had thought to buy even the mysteries of the sanctuary.*

The plundered Saxons were humbled by their misfortune. Returning to Rome, they submitted to the Pope's terms.† They were accompanied back to

* Anglo-Sax. Chron. A.D. 1061. "Efflante minas quod nummi quos Anglia quotannis Romanæ Papæ pensitat, hac occasione ulterius non inferrentur."—(Will. of Malm. Vit. Sti. Wulstan, ap. Whart. ii. c. 10, p. 250.) This life, it may be observed, is little more than a close translation of an Anglo-Saxon life by Coleman, a pupil, and afterwards chaplain, of St. Wulstan.—See William of Malmesbury's letter to the monks of Worcester, prefixed to the Life.

† "This circumstance," says the biographer, William of Malmesbury, "softened the rigour of the Apostolic See so far, that Aldred obtained the pallium of York on the express condition of resigning the church of Worcester" (c. x. p. 250). Homer sometimes nods: where is there one jot of abatement on the part of the Apostolic

England by some cardinal legates. The latter, having been received most honourably by St. Edward, traversed a great part of the kingdom, in company with Aldred.

During some stay at Worcester, the legates witnessed with admiration the holy, mortified life of St. Wulstan. When the election to the see of Worcester was afterwards discussed at court, the legates mentioned this servant of God; and the two archbishops and many others united in his praise. He was immediately summoned, and notwithstanding his resistance and grief, was chosen bishop of Worcester. He was consecrated by Aldred of York, Stigand being under suspension.

St. Wulstan could not endure pomp in his private buildings or furniture. Zealous for the canons, he ordered married priests to renounce either their "lust or their churches," and never ordained anyone priest unless he had sworn perpetual chastity. He had a remarkable reverence for cemeteries: he used to say, that many that slept there were saints; and he therefore forbade any one to ride through them. He himself (like Frithestane, the bishop of Worcester in 935) had a particular devotion for the souls in purgatory; and never heard of any one's death without at once saying the Pater Noster and three psalms. Every day, except Sundays and solemn festivals, he caused a mass to be sung for the dead. As a preacher, St. Wulstan's reputation was very high: the Bristol traffic in English slaves had been attacked both by the king and the Pope; and yielded only to the reiterated sermons of the indignant bishop. This was a solid proof of his eloquence; but it was as a confessor that he was truly unrivalled. With such cheerful kindness did he receive all comers, with such tears did he weep over their sins, that men thronged to him from all parts of England. It excited the

See? It made precisely the same canonical demands as before. The only instance of yielding was on the part of Aldred and his friends; they had become wise enough to obey the canons and the Holy See.

surprise of his household to find none more familiar with him than those "whose sins and penances he knew."*

Before, however, St. Wulstan could thus give himself to the duties of the ministry, indeed immediately after his consecration, he found himself engaged in a contest, which proved the wisdom of the rule so reluctantly submitted to by Tostig and Aldred. Aldred's motive, as it seems but too evidently, was avarice. Although he had ceased to have any control over the see of Worcester, he yet so far lost the fear of God, that he dared to retain almost all its possessions. St. Wulstan's personal application was almost fruitless: when no longer able to find a pretext for detaining him at York, Aldred dismissed him with only seven of his farms. It cost the new bishop much patience and long entreaty, to wring the chief property of his see from the usurper's grasp. Even to the end, Aldred enjoyed the revenues of twelve farms belonging to the see of Worcester.†

* Will. of Malm. Vita Sti. Wulst. pars ii. c. 7, 10, 11, 12, &c. "Uxoratos presbyteros omnes uno convenit edicto; aut libidini aut ecclesiis renuntiandum pronuntians" (c. 12, p. 263). Wharton would fain think that William meant canons instead of priests in general. If so groundless a supposition were admitted, we must omit "omnes," change "churches" into "stalls," and overlook the oath which St. Wulstan exacted from every candidate for the priesthood. Such fancies remind one unpleasantly of the editor of the Life of St. Elphege (see above, p. 223, note). In future they shall remain unnoticed.

† Chap. 12 and 13. Confirmation, or the supplement of baptism, is here translated from the Anglo-Saxon, "quod reliquum esset sacramentorum." This St. Wulstan carefully "supplied" in the case of "infants" (c. xv. p. 253). It may be observed that Stubbs, the Dominican, in his "Archbishops of York," gives a favourable account of Aldred. Stubbs, however, lived as late as the fourteenth century; had an interest in placing the archbishops of York in a pleasing light, as he wrote expressly, according to his own statement, in support of their see against certain claims of the see of Canterbury; and, in short, says not a word regarding the facts in the text, but passes them by in silence. Stubbs's idea of Aldred's character has, however, some colour from the expression of the Saxon Chronicle, "having held the see with much dignity" (anno 1069). Such an expression, of course, must be interpreted by facts; and about these the Saxon Chronicle, too, is perfectly silent.

When the Normans had invaded and conquered the whole country, and when the unhappy grasping Aldred had gone to his account, and when, too, Stigand had been degraded, and Thomas, a canon of Bayeux, was in the see of York, and Lanfranc in that of Canterbury, St. Wulstan, after another struggle, vindicated at last all the rights of his see. The question being pleaded before the Pope, was sent back to England. Sentence was given in favour of the see of Worcester.*

* Apud Whar. l. ii. ; Sim. Dun. De Gest. Reg. 1070.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CONQUEST—
THE THREE LEGATES—STIGAND DEPOSED—LANFRANC MADE ARCH-
BISHOP OF CANTERBURY—THE POPE REINSTATES THE BISHOP OF
CHICHESTER—LANFRANC'S DIFFICULTIES—THE ASSEMBLY AT
PENENDEN HEATH—HIS VISIONS—QUESTION OF OBEDIENCE—
LANFRANC AT ROME—HIS EXCESSIVE FACILITY—GUITMUND'S
REPLY TO WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

BEFORE St. Wulstan had thus recovered the property of his church, various events, some merely political, some even perverse if not disastrous, had already taken place, that gave, in their combined results, some promise of better times. Victorious over Harold, acknowledged by the Saxons, and desirous of being crowned again, William requested Alexander, the Pope, to send legates for this purpose. Alexander complied,* despatching to England three cardinals, of whom the most celebrated was Ermenfrid, the bishop of Sion, in La Valais, who had been once before (in the reign of the Confessor) the Pope's legate in England. These cardinal legates, soon after their arrival, held a great synod, in presence of the king, at Winchester. In this synod, several bishops

* "Missi ad petitionem ipsius a Papa Alexandro."—(Milo's Life of Lanfranc, p. 838.) The life of Lanfranc was written by Milo-Crispin, a contemporary monk of Bec, who long outlived the archbishop.—(Ap. Bolland. May, tom. vi. p. 833.) Gislebert, the abbot of Westminster (in the time of Lanfranc), wrote a life of Herluin, abbot of Bec, in which he inserted some account of Lanfranc. These insertions were extracted a few years after by Milo-Crispin, and formed the groundwork of his life of Lanfranc. Additional facts were collected from other works, or from the statement of "venerable and truthful men," and thus, at last, the biography was complete. It is edited by Selden, and is to be found likewise in Mabillon's *Acta Sanct. O. St. Bened. sæc. vi. pars ii. or tom. ix. pp. 632—657*, Venice.

and abbots were charged with negligence and unworthiness of life ; and being found guilty, were deposed by the legates.* The bishops were, Stigand's brother Agelmar, who was bishop of the East Angles, and Stigand himself.† The latter held in his own possession, two bishoprics, as well as the archiepiscopal see. He had likewise retained, for his own purposes, the abbeys of Winchester, Glastonbury, St. Alban's, St. Augustine's of Canterbury, and Ely. Even when Harold caused him to consecrate an abbot for the last-named monastery, he had kept some of its finest lands. He, indeed, gave to the house which he had thus robbed, rich vases of gold and silver, and a great crucifix, plated with silver, as large as life, with brazen images beside it of the Blessed Virgin and St. John the Evangelist ; but under such circumstances he could easily afford to be generous.

He had, moreover, taken possession of the see of Canterbury whilst its archbishop, Robert, was still living ; and had even dared to use Robert's pallium. He had, likewise, accepted a pallium from the Antipope, Benedict, whom the " holy Roman Church had excommunicated," for having attempted to gain access by money to the chair of St. Peter.

These actions, as it is evident, violated the canons in many ways, and added the guilt of schism to that of disobedience ; he was, therefore, solemnly degraded.

When he had thus been deprived of all ecclesiastical dignity and jurisdiction, the Conqueror added a punishment or precaution of his own—he shut him up in prison for life. William was but too glad to have a prospect of securing the election of Norman bishops and abbots, and thus to give greater stability to his throne. The interest which he had in these matters gave such a stimulus to his zeal for discipline, that, sometimes, he hurried prelates to his dungeons who had not been in

* " Ab ipsis legatis dejecti sunt."—Milo's *Life of Lanfranc*, p. 838 ; *Vita Sti. Wulst.* (Boll. Jan. 19) by Flor. of Worc. c. 1, No. 4.

† *Ib.*

fault; or, at least, had not been canonically deposed. Such was his treatment of Alric or Agelric, of Chichester,* who had been deposed in a second synod held by Ermenfrid of Sion. This deposition, however, the Pope was too just to tolerate. He wrote to William a letter, in which he congratulated him upon what he had done, in his zeal against simony, and for his love of the liberties of the Church; but he also reminded him that a crown is promised, not merely to a good beginning, but to that which is proved to be good by its end. "Adorn the churches of Christ," he added, "and rule your kingdom in such a manner, that it may be truly said of you, 'The heart of the king is in the hand of God.' Defend ecclesiastics, protect in mercy widows, orphans, and the oppressed, mindful of the account which you will have to render for them to the King of kings, the High Arbiter of all your kingdom. That you may thus act and advance in other virtues, we exhort you to obey the admonitions and counsels of Lanfranc.

"We likewise wish to inform you," he continued, "that Alric, formerly bishop of Chichester, has been deposed by our legates on suppositious grounds. Conformably to the canons, therefore, we have decided that he must first be restored, and then that Archbishop Lanfranc, our brother, try and decide his cause."† For Lanfranc, the abbot of Caen, in Normandy, had, some time before the receipt of this letter, been raised to the archiepiscopal throne. As soon as Stigand had been deposed, all eyes were turned towards Lanfranc. The king and queen, the nobles and legates, as well as Lanfranc's abbot, the blessed Herluin, all pressed him to accept the now vacant see of Canterbury (A.D. 1070).

Lanfranc was born of a noble family in the city of Pavia. He abandoned honours and dignities, and his native city, to devote himself to learning, and to

* Sim. Dun. Hist. de Gest. Reg. an. 1070; Florence of Worcester, tom. ii. p. 6, ed. Eng. Hist. Soc.

† Ep. of Al. II. ap. Wilk. i. p. 326.

the love of the ever-living God. In the course of time he became a monk in the abbey of Bec. Invited to England by the command both of the Pope and the king, he was, after some resistance, compelled to accept the vacant archbishopric.

When, however, he began to feel the weight of his new dignity, he thus wrote to the Pope, in hopes of escaping back to his beloved solitude:—"I have been made, by some mysterious judgment of God, the watcher, by your command, over a large and numberless population. This, the above-mentioned prince (William of Normandy), who has now become king of England, laboured in many and various ways to bring about. His efforts were unavailing; he was unable to make me yield to his request, until your legates, viz., Ermenfrid, bishop of Sion, and Hubert, cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, came into Normandy, and commanded me, in the name of the Apostolic See, to undertake, in their presence, the government of the church of Canterbury. Against these, the feebleness of my strength, the open avowal of my unworthiness of life, availed nothing. Nor had my excuse of ignorance of the language, and the barbarism of the people,* any weight with them. What more? I assented; I came; I undertook. In this office I endure so many afflictions, so much weariness, and so great a deficiency of almost all that is good: I incessantly hear, see, and feel so many troubles of others of every class;† so many trials and losses, so much hard-heartedness, cupidity, and filthiness, and such calamities drawn down upon Holy Church, that I am weary of my life, and grieve exceedingly that I have survived for such times. If the circumstances actually before us are bad, reflection makes us conjecture that they will be much worse for the future."‡

* "*Excusatio incognitæ linguæ gentiumque barbararum.*"—Ap. Boll. May 28, p. 839.

† "*Aliorum in diversis personis, &c.*"

‡ *Vita Lanf.* p. 839—924.

Perceiving no means of escape, Lanfranc now, at length, submitted.* His first glance at his cathedral city and its immediate neighbourhood, must have fully revealed to him the difficulties of his new position. His cathedral church of Canterbury was a mere heap of ruins, having been burnt to the ground a few years before. The monastic institute lay in as deplorable a condition as the cathedral, having been allowed to grow almost obsolete. As only four of the monks of Canterbury survived the martyrdom of St. Elphege, they had been obliged to admit men into their order, who indeed wore the habit, but had not been thoroughly trained to the spirit of monks. The consequence was, such a laxity of rule, that very soon the whole body had the appearance of secular canons.†

Nor were these the only difficulties of the new archbishop: during the confusion of the Conquest, its vassals had been oppressed, and many of its manors had been seized by Odo, the Norman earl of Kent.

Undaunted by so gloomy a prospect, Lanfranc began energetically, and toiled on perseveringly, until all these evils were totally and speedily remedied. The cathedral was rebuilt with chiselled stone from Normandy; and, before long, no fewer than a hundred and fifty monks were, day and night, chanting the praises of God. The attempt to wrest from Odo, and his Norman warriors, the lands and rights of the see, was a more arduous undertaking.

To decide the question, it was necessary that the old customs of the English should be clearly ascertained. William, therefore, summoned the men of Kent, both Normans and English, to Penenden Heath.

* For William's reply to the Pope regarding homage and the collection of money for the Holy See, refusing the former, and granting the latter, see Appendix, B.

† This being the statement of a Canterbury monk, may outweigh the assertion of some modern writers, that the monks of the archiepiscopal see had died out even before the days of St. Elphege; but Lingard (*A. Sax. Antiq.* 2) says a colony of Benedictines was introduced by Archbishop Elfric into Canterbury in 1003 or 1006 (p. 294, and note).

At this celebrated meeting, Goisfrid, the bishop of Constance, presided in the king's name. He was assisted by the wisdom of Ægelric, of Chichester, a bishop far advanced in years, and thoroughly skilled in the Anglo-Saxon laws. The king, anxious not to lose his services, provided him with a special four-wheeled vehicle for the occasion. The bishop of Rochester and many barons, both of the king and the archbishop, were among the spectators. Odo and Lanfranc were, of course, the chiefs of the contending parties. For three days, the meeting remained upon the heath, in close discussion. The cause of Lanfranc was, at last, triumphant. Odo had to yield back to the church no fewer than twenty-five manors.*

Lanfranc's own explanation of this successful close of the contest is as follows.—Whilst the meeting was discussing its business, he thought of St. Dunstan, and implored his assistance. Then, having offered the holy sacrifice for the same object, he withdrew from amongst the lawyers to a retired spot; and there remained quietly seated, revolving in his mind what to object, and what to reply, to his adversaries. In the midst of these thoughts, he suddenly fell into an ecstasy, and beheld St. Dunstan with a bland, celestial aspect, attended on each side by another being of equally angelic appearance. Encouraged by this vision, he boldly confronted his opponents, and won the cause.

A few days after, when at some distance from Canterbury, he was seized with so severe an attack of illness, that all hopes of his recovery disappeared. Desiring to be buried in the archiepiscopal city, he sent for the "elders" of his church. While they stood beside his bed, lamenting their impending loss, whether from pity for their sorrow, or in the anguish of his own sufferings, he turned his face to the wall,

* Vita, 30 and 31, p. 841; Ernulf, De Reb. Eccl. Roff. ap. Whart. i. p. 336; Ead. Hist. Nov. Selden's ed. pp. 8 and 9; Act. Pont. Cant. Gerv. p. 1650, ap. Decem. Scrip.

recollecting himself in prayer. Perceiving this, they silently withdrew.

Some little time after, he suddenly called those that were sleeping near him, and told them that he was quite well. He had seen, he assured them, a wonderful vision, and was now perfectly cured. He said that he beheld seated upon white horses which were hung with golden trappings, a great multitude of men in white robes, with their faces glittering like the sun. Innocent merriment resounded through the cavalcade, as it passed by; the riders bantering one another with jokes as kind as they were mirthful. Lanfranc's heart grew joyous as he gazed. He ventured to ask the meaning of what he saw. He was told that it was Dunstan's retinue; and that Dunstan himself was not far off. Lanfranc eagerly sought one for whom he had so great a veneration. He found him, kissed his foot, and was cured.

The attendants listened to the wonderful recital; but it was with a strong impression that the poor archbishop was delirious. In obedience, however, to his command, they prepared an altar, and summoned the elders. The latter came with the fear upon them, that they were called to witness Lanfranc's death. Great was their surprise when they entered his apartment. When they had before seen him, he could "scarcely move his lips;" but now, with his usual voice, he exclaimed, "This day shall be to you a day of good tidings. Know that our lord and father Dunstan has been here, and completely cured me." Their surprise was increased by another cure equally marvellous. In the same part of the house in which the archbishop lay (it was probably the infirmary), and separated from him by nothing more than a wooden partition, a priest was lying sick, who was wasted to a skeleton by a prolonged fever. This priest was favoured with a vision not unlike Lanfranc's, and was suddenly cured by St. Dunstan, at the same moment as the archbishop.*

* Osb. Vit. Sti. Duns. l. ii. c. 2, ap. Boll. May 19th, p. 380 and

Whilst Lanfranc was as yet only beginning to overcome his difficulties; and, indeed, almost immediately after his consecration, a question had arisen with regard to the mutual jurisdiction of the sees of Canterbury and York.*

Thomas, the bishop elect of York, came to the

381. Does it seem injudicious to insert these visions in a history? If they be well attested, the historian surely is justified. Now, the visions and miracles narrated in the text were written by Osbern, himself educated in the church of Canterbury, and one of the clergy and counsellors of Lanfranc. He was, therefore, not only contemporary, but had every means of ascertaining the facts, and was, perhaps, actually present. There being so many witnesses of the archbishop's recovery, as well as that of the priest, Osbern's account must be true; or else he and his contemporaries in the church of Canterbury must have been in a conspiracy, when without any direct personal interest, to give currency to what they knew to be a falsehood. The latter supposition is monstrous, has no one fact to support it, and is contrary to what is known of Osbern's character. His account, it may be added, is corroborated by Eadmer, himself a contemporary, and by William of Malmesbury, who was all but a contemporary. With such a weight of authority, the writer holds the facts to be proved.

* For one or two specimens of the professions of obedience to the see of Canterbury, see Appendix, C. That of Donatus of Dublin is not easily explained, unless it be supposed that Ireland, or the Danish part of it, was subject to Canterbury. Yet the diocese of Dublin must still have remained peopled, in great measure, by the old Irish race. How, on the supposition that Armagh enjoyed the primacy of Ireland, and that the Danes of the city of Dublin were converted, how could these old Catholics concur with the new Catholics to put themselves, by their own private act, under the see of Canterbury? They could not, except by an act of schism. It is the supposition of Usher, and, as he was a Protestant, such a solution can excite no great surprise. Yet Lanigan, learned and Catholic as he is, has followed Usher. Can it be that Donatus's profession has not been faithfully copied from the Canterbury registers? This Lanigan has not asserted, being apparently unconscious of the existence of such a profession.

It is true, he quotes Usher's assertion, that the diocese of Dublin was confined to the city itself, not extending beyond its walls. Yet, if so, how was it that, in the following century (A.D. 1152), when Dublin was still a Danish town, it was selected to be one of the four archiepiscopal sees of Ireland? and this in preference to the five suffragan bishoprics?—(Lanigan, iii. p. 434, and iv. p. 146.) These observations are hazarded, not with a view to any theory, but simply for elucidation.

archbishop of Canterbury, according to an ancient custom, to be consecrated. Lanfranc, alleging the practice of his predecessors, required a written profession, as well as an oath, of obedience. Thomas, however, refused to take the oath, unless he discovered written authority and weighty reasons in favour of Lanfranc's demand. After some discussion, he withdrew without having been consecrated.

When the king heard this, he became angry, thinking that Lanfranc was relying more upon mere learning than upon truth and reason. Very soon after, however, Lanfranc, in a great council, convinced the king and his Norman barons that he was right; and the impression thus made was confirmed by the testimony of the Anglo-Saxons.

It was therefore unanimously determined,* that Thomas should be consecrated, and should make the profession required. Soon after, in obedience to a summons from the Holy See, Lanfranc went to Rome for his pallium (A.D. 1071). He was accompanied by the archbishop of York, and Remigius of Lincoln. Both Thomas and Remigius were there accused of having transgressed the canons; the former by receiving orders, although he was the son of a priest; and the latter with having obtained his bishopric through a previous and simoniacal compact to assist the Conqueror in his expedition against Harold.

Having no just excuse to make, they yielded back their crosiers and rings, and then threw themselves upon the Pope's mercy. Lanfranc (perhaps weakly considering the grasping disposition of William) interceded for their restoration. He had no better plea to offer, than their intimate acquaintance with English politics, and their necessity for William in his new kingdom.

The Pope had once been Lanfranc's pupil; and perhaps was unwilling to grieve his old master. He replied, "Well! you are the father of that country; and, therefore, consider carefully what is expedient.

* Vita, xxv. &c. p. 840, &c.

See, here are the crosiers which they have given back. Take them and confer them in such a manner as may be for the greatest possible utility to the Christianity of that country." Lanfranc immediately gave them again to Thomas and Remigius. Then receiving his pallium, he returned to England.*

That Lanfranc erred at least in judgment, by procuring the appointment of these bishops, seems evident from the king's subsequent conduct towards the Church. The want of ordinary Christian instruction amongst the laity, and of knowledge and discipline amongst too many of the clergy and monks was lamentable; but the power of the Church to mitigate these evils was greatly diminished because its free action was impeded by the king. William revered the Church, but was too despotic to love it truly, by loving its freedom: he would not allow any one to be acknowledged Pope without his authority; nor to receive letters from the Pope unless he had himself inspected them; nor without his own sanction and authority, would he suffer the archbishop of Canterbury, even in synod, to issue commands or prohibitions. If this be true (and it is the statement of Eadmer), can Lanfranc be exonerated from blame for tolerating such encroachments? Had he resolutely entered upon a struggle for the liberty of the Church, perhaps the efforts of St. Anselm and St. Thomas would have been unnecessary. Yet as few monuments of that age survive, it would perhaps be rash to pronounce. "He was a good pastor," says Eadmer, "to the utmost of his ability."†

Whatever may be our judgment of Lanfranc, there was one, at least, to be found, who had dared to reject the king's favours, and to tell him plain but wholesome truths. This was Guitmund, a Norman monk, a man fervent and learned, one of those who had most

* Ead. Hist. Nov. pp. 6 and 7; Seld. Ep. vi. Lanfranci ap. Max. Bib. Vet. Patr. t. xviii.

† "Ac in quantum sibi licuit bonum pastorem," &c.—Hist. Nov. p. 12; Selden.

ably and successfully refuted the errors of Berengarius.*

Summoned from his monastery in the neighbourhood of Evreux, and standing in the presence of William and his courtiers, he thus replied to the king's offer of a bishopric: "I am infirm both in body and soul, how then can I undertake the government of others? Much less, therefore, can I undertake to rule those whose relatives and dearest friends you have imprisoned, banished, or slain. Search the Scriptures, and see if there be any law to sanction the violent thrusting of a pastor upon the flock. An ecclesiastical and canonical choice ought to be made; but such an election no longer exists: you have deprived it of its liberty, and making it a spoil of war, offer it to one who has renounced all things for Christ's sake. Do not be offended with me; but remember God's judgment. You have conquered, but remember this only adds to your danger in the more perilous conflict of spiritual wickedness. As the judgment of God when you render an account of your stewardship is the more hidden, so is it the more terrible. For my part, I prefer the poverty of Christ to the riches of Croesus or Sardanapalus" (A.D. 1070).

This fearless address was received with honour and reverence. He was allowed to return to his monastery. Gregory VII. afterwards raised him to the dignity of cardinal. He finally became archbishop of Aversa in Apulia.†

* Berengarius was archdeacon of Angers in the middle of the eleventh century. His error regarding the Real Presence he is thought to have imbibed from John Scotus Erigena, a layman of the preceding century, some of whose writings were condemned in various councils. Berengarius was immediately condemned in a council at Rome, by Leo IX. (A.D. 1050). Lanfranc strongly called the archdeacon's attention to the fact of his denying what was held by all Christians; and meeting him face to face in the Council of Tours, so clearly proved the truth of the Real Presence, that Berengarius recanted. He, indeed, fell again, but again recanted; and this several times. He seems to have died in the Catholic faith. Lanfranc's treatise on the "Body and Blood of the Lord" is printed in the Max. Bib. Patr. t. xviii. p. 776.

† Ord. Vitalis, lib. iv. 8.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ALDWIN'S PILGRIMAGE TO THE RUINED MONASTERIES OF THE NORTH
—JARROW AND WEARMOUTH—WHITBY—ST. MARY'S, YORK—
RIEVAULX AND FOUNTAINS—DEATH OF WALCHER OF DURHAM—
NATURE OF THE MONASTIC INSTITUTE—LANFRANC'S CONSTITUTIONS.

DISASTROUS as the period of the Norman Conquest undoubtedly was, it was attended, nevertheless, by an increase both of fervour and learning, and was especially marked by the re-establishment in the North of the long-forgotten monastic discipline.

For two hundred years all the monasteries of Northumbria had been left in squalid ruin. Not a hand had been stretched forth to repair them, or to rekindle the spirit that alone could people them. At length, a poor monk of the South was raised up for this important work. This was Aldwin, one of the Benedictines of Winchcomb, between Evesham and Cheltenham. He had read of the great numbers of religious that formerly lived in Northumbria; and he longed to visit their deserted monasteries, not indeed to rebuild or repeople them (of that he had as yet no idea), but simply to be thus stirred up to imitate their poverty of life. Being a prudent man, he took counsel of some of the brethren of Evesham. They approved of his purpose; and two of them, Elfwy, a deacon, and Reinfrid, a person unable to read* (apparently a lay brother), offered of their own accord to become the companions of his pilgrimage. Their abbot released them from their obedience to himself,

* Simeon's expression, "ignarus literarum," taken with the text, seems plainly to show that Reinfrid's case, even in a generation born and bred amid ruin and bloodshed, was an exception to the generality of religious.

by appointing Aldwin to be their superior. Having placed their books and the priestly vestments upon a sorry-looking donkey, they bade farewell to the Evesham community (A.D. 1074), and traversed on foot all the midland parts of the island, until they arrived, first at Monkstown or Monkaster, afterwards Newcastle, and finally, on the invitation of Walcher, bishop of Durham, at Jarrow, on the Tyne, where they took up their residence. There, they reared huts against the dilapidated walls; and forming over their oratory a homely roof of the trunks of trees and hay, sung cheerfully, in their penitential privations, the praises of God.

The country people thought them mad. They knew nothing of monks. They saw, indeed, the ruins of monasteries, blackened with Danish fires; but they knew nothing, it would seem, of the inhabitants of such places. They soon, however, learned to admire, and at last to imitate.

Several Northumbrians, as well as some of the southern English, having joined the fervent little band, and Walcher, or Walchelin, the bishop of Durham, having granted them lands for their support, Aldwin resumed his pilgrimage. Leaving Elfwy, now a priest, to preside over the rising monastery, Aldwin crossed the Scottish borders, and took up his abode in the ruins of Melrose. As, however, Malcolm of Scotland would not allow him to remain, unless he took an oath of fealty, and as Walcher was pressing him to return, even under a threat of excommunication, he withdrew from Melrose to Wearmouth. Here, amidst the tangled thicket that had overspread the place, nothing presented itself but heaps of rubbish. It was not, however, a poetical fancy or love of the picturesque, that led Aldwin thus from place to place. He wished not for anything earth could give: he ever bore in mind that we are travellers and pilgrims here, looking for a lasting habitation, the true land of promise. His fervour, therefore, abated not at the desolation around him. He cleared away soil,

bramble, tree; all that stood in the way, until he had laid bare sufficient of the old stone-work of the church, to support a kind of roof. The dwelling which he made for himself, was chiefly composed of matted twigs. Despite of poverty and its trials, a numerous community was gradually formed, many flocking to the pilgrim-monk from the most distant parts of the country.

Reinfrid, the third companion of Aldwin, had, meantime, gone to Whitby, and having collected a fervent body of religious, remained there till the completion of his earthly pilgrimage. After his death, a part of the community was removed to York. This fourth monastery was dedicated to Mary, the Blessed Mother of God. Its ruins still mark the spot.

Nearly sixty years had passed since the re-establishment of Whitby, when the monks at St. Mary's heard that at Rievaulx, or the Rie-vale, there had been planted a colony of Cistercian monks.* They had been sent by St. Bernard, the abbot of Cîteaux, at the request of Walter d'Essec, the leader in the battle of the Standard. Richard, the prior of St. Mary's, was seized with a desire to embrace a rule so strictly in accordance with that of the great St. Benedict. An abbot, generally speaking, is bound to satisfy such a desire; yet the abbot of St. Mary's resisted. The prior, on the other hand, was firm to what he knew to be the better way. Accompanied by the elders of his monastery, he left York, and having received from the archbishop, Turstin, a grant of land in a valley near Ripon, he there established the far-famed Abbey of Fountains.†

* During the reign of William the Conqueror, the Cluniac monks, a reformed Benedictine monastery, sent their first colony to England, through the instrumentality of the earl of Warrenne.—Steph. Monast. p. 10.

† Sim. Hist. de Dunelm. Eccl. l. iii. c. 21, 22, 23; and De Gest. Reg. an. 1074; and Simeon's Continuator, an. 1132; Will. Newb. l. i. c. 14.

Simeon, a monk who was precentor of the church of St. Cuthbert at Durham, undertook his History of the Church of Durham at the

Long before the establishment of the three last-named monasteries, Walcher was contemplating the erection of a religious house in his own cathedral, where slept the body of St. Cuthbert. His design was frustrated by his sudden death. The wild half-Danish, and as yet scarcely more than half-Christian, races of the North, after a sanguinary, though desultory resistance, and after having destroyed Robert de Comyn and his knights at Durham, as well as the Norman garrison at York, and after having been punished by an unsparing ravage of sixty miles of the country, had sullenly yielded to the sway of William the Conqueror. Walcher of Durham, being himself a foreigner (a native of Lorraine), was not likely to be regarded with much affection. What was still more against him, he accepted the temporal care of all Northumbria, when William had put to death the good Earl Waltheof, the darling of the people (A.D. 1075). Walcher seems to have been upright in his intentions, and generally zealous in his numerous duties. One point he neglected, the care of his own household. His Norman vassals were domineering and oppressive. Quarrels arose, and blood was shed. Yet Walcher, it seems, feared his own violent followers more than he feared the judgments of God. He made no strong effort to quell their injustice; and soon rued his weakness. Two of his chief councillors were Leobwin, his chaplain, and Ligulf, a noble Northumbrian. The former, it is said, envied Ligulf. At all events, the murder of Ligulf soon after by the bishop's Norman soldiers, was attributed to Leobwin. Seeing the strong feeling which was now awakened, Walcher went to Gateshead, and held an assembly in the church, in order to attempt a reconciliation between

command of his superiors (Apol.) He drew his account from Venerable Bede, and various "little works," or else, where written sources failed, from "truthful old men who had seen what they related, or had often heard it from their fathers—these fathers being religious and trustworthy men, and having been present" at the actions which they described.—Hist. Sim. Dun. c. i. Twysden's ed. Lon. 1652.

the two races. The chief men of the neighbourhood declared to him plainly, that as he himself, as well as Leobwin, had received Ligulf's murderers as friends, they could put no confidence in him. They then withdrew, under pretence of deliberating upon some proposal; and, immediately, an armed crowd, with wild uproar, rushed together, slew the unguarded Norman soldiers who were lounging about, and fired the church. The few that remained with the bishop, perceived at once the full extent of their danger. They confessed their sins to one another, and going forth, were hewn down as soon as they emerged from the smoke and fire. Gilbert and a few knights first went, fighting for life, but to no purpose. Leobwin followed. The bishop was the last.* With his mantle wrapped over his head and face, having made the sign of the cross, he stepped from the gate, and was immediately transfixes with lances, his lifeless body being hacked with swords and treated with every indignity. The murderers hurried to Durham Castle, but after assaulting it furiously for four days, they abandoned the attempt. A large Norman army was speedily on the spot, and the country was again pillaged and burnt, and its wretched inhabitants indiscriminately butchered.

When these commotions had in some degree subsided, William, the new bishop of Durham, whom the Conqueror, forgetful of the canons, had presumed to elect, saw with regret that the clergy of his church were neither monks nor canons regular. He perused Venerable Bede's History, and his Life of St. Cuthbert; and he interrogated old and prudent men regarding the ancient usages of his diocese. Finding that all authorities agreed that St. Cuthbert had been served, both living and dead, by monks, he applied for further advice to the king and queen, and to Archbishop Lanfranc.

* There is some discrepancy in Simeon's writings. In his History of Durham Church, "the bishop remained last;" in his Acts of the English Kings, Leobwin was last.

The king immediately despatched a messenger to Pope Gregory. The Pope thought the monks in the whole diocese too few for forming another monastery. He, therefore, commanded the little communities of Wearmouth and Jarrow to be united, and transferred to Durham; and he sent the blessing of "the Lord and St. Peter" to all that would help on the good work, and anathema to all its opposers.

The monks, accordingly, broke up their establishments on the Wear and Tyne, and meeting together, followed the bishop to Durham (A.D. 1083). The bishop delivered to them the church, and gave them his blessing. He then called the canons, and told them that, if they wished to remain, they must remain only as monks. All of them withdrew, except their dean. The example of the monks soon began to have an influence upon the conduct both of clergy and people. As fervour revived, the majesty of the house of God revived. When the churches had sunk under the Danish torch, they had either been left in ruin, or had been constructed of wattles and hay. They were now in many places solidly rebuilt, and decently, and sometimes magnificently, adorned.*

Should the reader wish to know thoroughly the life of the monks of those times, he should pay a few days' visit to any of our modern reformed monasteries, and with this living commentary before his eyes, should study diligently the Constitutions of Lanfranc.

These Constitutions he wrote for the practical use of the monks of Canterbury. They afford an ample insight into the life of a monk, not only in general, but in minute detail, from morning to morning, from the beginning to the end of the year, and from the highest to the lowest in the monastery. This interesting work was, with some trifling alterations, only a compilation of the existing, though ancient, practices of the most famous of the Benedictine monasteries.

Amongst other points worthy of notice, an inquirer

* Sim. Hist. de Dunelm. Eccl. l. iii. c. 24, and l. iv. c. 1; and Hist. de Gest. Reg. 1074, 1075.

would learn that the monks, simple as they were, had much practical wisdom. For one brief passing instance : they were very charitable ; but though they refused none, it would be a mistake to suppose that they were lavish and indiscriminate. To visit the houses of the poor is the surest means of knowing their real wants. This the monks well knew. Among other offices was that of the eleemosynarius. It was his duty to go, if possible, in person, to discover the abodes of such of the sick or enfeebled as were unable to support themselves. He had to go upon this business in company with two lay brothers. Having found the house, and the women within having left it, he was to enter, and with kind words to console the object of his visit. Then he was to inquire into and relieve his wants. If the poor person needed anything more than the eleemosynarius brought, the latter was to procure it, if it were possible. When the objects of charity were women, the eleemosynarius did not enter their houses, but gave them relief by the hands of his servants, the lay brothers.*

* Ap. Wilk. i. p. 350.

CHAPTER XXVII.

COUNCILS OF LONDON AND WINCHESTER—THE CHOR-EPISCOPUS OF ST. MARTIN'S—FRIENDSHIP OF LANFRANC AND ST. ANSELM—THEIR CONVERSATION UPON THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. ELPHEGE—REMORSE AND DEATH OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR—GRIEF AND DEATH OF LANFRANC—VIOLENT OPPRESSION OF THE CHURCH—WILLIAM RUFUS'S ILLNESS—ST. ANSELM COMPELLED TO BECOME ARCHBISHOP.

WHILE the work of the Church Militant was thus, despite of occasional losses, advancing rapidly in the North, it was still making progress, though slowly and laboriously, in the South. Yet the details of what was done during the remainder of William the Conqueror's reign are but obscurely known. Amongst the last ecclesiastical proceedings in the South, of any note, was a council at London, held in 1075; and one at Winchester, in 1076. The former met in St. Paul's, Lanfranc and Thomas of York, twelve other bishops and twenty-one abbots being present. The following were its most important acts:—

“Because, for many years back, the practice of holding councils had grown obsolete in England, some things were renewed which are known to have been also defined by the ancient canons.”

As the decrees of the Popes Damasus and Leo, and the councils of Sardica and Laodicea, forbade episcopal sees to be fixed in villas instead of cities, Herman, of Sherborne, through the king's liberality, and by the authority of the synod, was transferred to Sarum, or Old Salisbury; Stigand, of Selsey, to Chichester; and Peter, of Lichfield, to Chester.*

* It was probably about this time, likewise, that Dorchester was transferred to Lincoln; and Helmham to Thetford, and soon afterwards to Norwich.—See Mil. Crisp. Vita B. Lanf. 32; ap. Boll. and Vita S. Remig. Mabil. ix. p. 767 and 768; see, too, about the other sees, Malm.'s Pont.

“To repress the insolence of some indiscreet persons, no one but the bishops and abbots were to be allowed to speak in the council, unless with the express leave of the metropolitan.” Prohibitions were made, at the same time, against simony; divination, and other “works of the devil;” and against the concurrence of bishops or abbots, or any of the clergy, in judgments affecting life or limb.

The limits of the province of York were likewise defined, being the Humber and the farthest point of Scotland. Thomas of York, on this occasion, gave a written profession of obedience to the archbishop of Canterbury, the usual oath being waived on the protest that its omission should afford no precedent for Thomas’s successors.*

The council of Winchester, which met in the following year, allowed married priests, if living in the country, to retain their wives; the unmarried were commanded to remain so. Bishops were warned not to ordain deacons or priests, unless they had solemnly promised not to marry. Bishops were not to hold two sees, and were to celebrate their diocesan synods once, or (according to another manuscript) twice every year. Chalices were not to be of wax or wood. Altars were to be of stone. Baptism was to be administered only at Easter and Pentecost, except in danger of death. If laymen, when accused before the bishop, refused to obey his summons, they were to be cited twice more, and then excommunicated.†

From this last enactment, and from a subsequent royal mandate, it would appear that Lanfranc had entreated William to change the law that required the bishop to hold his ecclesiastical court amidst that of the hundredmote. Certain it is that the king, with the advice of his bishops and nobles, declared that the former custom was against the canons, and commanded the bishops and their archdeacons to hold their courts apart from the hundred. Every one when cited, no

* Wilk. i. 363; Labbe ad. ann. Crispin; ap. Mab. ix. p. 651.

† Ap. Labbe, A.D. 1076.

matter for what fault, was to appear at the place appointed, and to answer, not according to the hundred, but according to the canons and episcopal laws. "If any one, elated with pride," refused to appear, he was to be excommunicated; and, if necessary, was to be forced by the royal power to submit. William, at the same time, forbade his judges and ministers, and every layman, to meddle with the laws regarding the bishop.*

Conformably with the canon, which forbids any bishop to hold two sees, Lanfranc abolished the see of St. Martin's, near Canterbury. This church had, it was said, been for many years held by a bishop. Such a prelate in the immediate neighbourhood of the archiepiscopal see, and exercising no separate jurisdiction, or, at least, never appearing in synod, could have been no other than a "chor-episcopus." The office of a chor-episcopus was usually to act as a vicar-general in country places, or in some remote part of the diocese. It was sometimes discharged by a priest having special faculties; and sometimes, as in the instance just mentioned, by a bishop, whose jurisdiction depended upon the prelate whose place he supplied.†

While Lanfranc was toiling at his post; now striving to renovate both learning and discipline, and now to temper the "stark man's" justice with clemency, he was, from time to time, refreshed in his labours, by the visits of his friend, the blessed Anselm, the abbot of Bec.‡

St. Anselm was born of a noble family in Aosta, or Aoust, a city of Lombardy (A.D. 1033). When not as yet fifteen, he endeavoured to gain admittance into a monastery. He was refused, because he wished to enter without his father's knowledge. When he began to approach manhood, he gradually allowed his fervour to cool; and abandoning study, in which he had made great progress, he plunged into the

* Ap. Labbe, A.D. 1085, p. 403.

† Ib.; Ferraris, Bibl.

‡ Ead. Hist. Nov. pp. 12 and 13.

business and diversions of the world. Fortunately for his salvation, the temper of his father was so exceedingly captious, as to oblige him to leave his native country. For three years he remained wandering in the south and middle of France. Arriving in Normandy, he heard so much of Lanfranc's learning, and of the crowds of dignified clergy that resorted to him, that he made his acquaintance, became his scholar, and at last became his brother in the religious life (A.D. 1060). St. Anselm was now in his twenty-seventh year. Two years later, Lanfranc was made abbot of St. Stephen's monastery, at Caen, and St. Anselm succeeded him as prior of Bec. From his humble, mortified, fervent life, it was evident, that from a man of the world, full of its false maxims, the new prior had become a true man of the cloister. His prolonged vigils gave him opportunity not only for meditation and prayer, but for copying books, which had become everywhere greatly corrupted. In course of time, he succeeded the blessed Herluin, as abbot of the monastery.*

In his visits to England, St. Anselm never forgot to call upon his friend, the archbishop of Canterbury. We know but little of what passed between them; but from the chief facts of the time, and from the learning and holiness of the two friends, we may form some idea of the nature of their conversations. One of these, however, and this, too, a most interesting one for those that love the saints of their native land, has, fortunately, been transmitted to our own times. Lanfranc happened once to speak of his predecessors, and at last made mention of the blessed Elphege. "The English," he said, "amongst whom we live, hold certain men to be saints whose merits are uncertain. One of these, Elphege, our predecessor, reposes in our

* Eadmer's Life of St. Ans. P. i. c. 1, 2, &c. in the Bollandists. Eadmer wrote not only a life of St. Anselm, referring chiefly to the saint's private life; but also a history of Recent Events ("Historia Novorum") which includes the public life both of Lanfranc and St. Anselm.

church ; a good man, it is true, and one whom they reverence not only as a saint, but as a martyr. But when I search into his history, I find that he was stoned by the pagans, and, at length, after many insults, much contumely, and scourging, that he was destroyed by the sword, on this account, that he would not for the ransom of his own person extort from his vassals the money which was demanded. Since, therefore, it is not the suffering, but the cause, that makes a martyr, I wish to hear your opinion as to whether they should be restrained or followed." St. Anselm thus replied : "He who chose to die rather than to inflict an injury upon those whom he was especially bound to defend, seems to me a glorious martyr. And, evidently, he who had such a horror of what appears a trifling matter, would persevere most faithfully in confessing Christ. For he who avoids the least, does not easily yield to grievous, sins. Thus, therefore, John is esteemed by me a renowned martyr in the cause of truth ; thus Elphege, too, in the cause of justice. For both suffered for Christ, who as he is Truth, so is he also Justice." In this reasoning Lanfranc *acquiesced* ; and that so completely, that he appointed the history of the martyr to be read, and his feast to be solemnly kept, every year.*

Both the Conqueror and the archbishop were now growing infirm. The former was summoned to judgment two years before the latter. His mortal illness came upon him in the midst of an act of revenge, while giving the houses and churches of Mantes to the flames. Having the utmost veneration for St. Anselm, he called the saintly abbot to his bedside, and made him keep very near him. Growing somewhat better, he deferred his confession. Then came his agony quite unexpectedly, while the man of God was detained by a grievous sickness on the opposite bank of the Seine. William bitterly lamented

* John of Salisbury's Life of Ead. ap. Whart. tom. ii. p. 162 ; see also Milo Crispin's Life of Lanfranc, Acta SS. O. Sti. Bened. sect. vi. pars 2, or tom. ix. p. 654, Venice.

his neglect; and made what preparation time still allowed.* Having arranged all his earthly affairs, he exhorted those that were around him to keep faith and justice, and peace, and the law of God; and to observe the privileges of churches, and the laws of their fathers. Then, with many tears, he narrated the course of his whole life. In such a series of victories, human nature, he said, was inclined to exult. Yet in him such emotions were quelled, by the fear of his impending judgment, and the remembrance that in all his exploits a savage temerity was allowed its unrestrained indulgence. "Therefore do I supppliantly beseech you, O priests and ministers of Christ, to commend me to Almighty God, that He may forgive the sins with which I am all but overwhelmed. The Church of God, our Mother, I have always protected. I have endeavoured to procure for its higher dignities men of holiness and learning. The ten religious houses which my ancestors founded in Normandy I have in every way befriended. During my own reign, seventeen houses of monks, and six of nuns, have been built in this duchy; places 'where devoted service and abundant alms-deeds are performed, for the love of the Supreme King.' Such are the fortresses with which Normandy is strengthened, where the children of the earth learn to fight against the demons, and the vices of the flesh. Of these I was either the founder or the warm supporter. In this, my sons, imitate my example. If you would obtain honour and glory, let the good and wise be your chosen companions; and in all things obey their commands." While he thus spoke, the remembrance of his cruelties in England, and especially his ravage of the North, came vividly across his mind. "I rushed," he groaned forth, "upon the Northern English like a raging lion. I ordered their houses, their corn-fields, and all their implements and household stuff to be forthwith consumed with fire; and their numerous herds

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. i. p. 13, Seld.

and flocks to be slaughtered on every side. I, therefore, by the sharp point of dire famine, sacrificed a multitude, and thus many thousands of men, old and young, of a race most fair, alas! unhappy that I am, I destroyed." *

Thus, with bitter remorse, yet with trust in the blood of Christ and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, died this stern but able warrior (A.D. 1087).

When the Conqueror had gone to his account, the remainder of Lanfranc's life became a period of uninterrupted affliction. William Rufus, at his accession, had not only himself sworn, but had caused as many others as possible to swear too, to temper justice with mercy, and to defend against all persons the liberty, peace, and security of the Church. As soon as his enemies were disarmed, and his throne secured, he thought no more of his plighted word or solemn oath. When temperately chided by Lanfranc, his eyes and countenance became inflamed with passion: "Who is there," he exclaimed, "who can keep all that he has promised?" Such an answer spoke volumes for the evils of the future. With a heavy heart, Lanfranc continued his duties; but he was evidently sinking fast. He died in 1089.

He was poor in dress, and sparing at table. Ever intent upon business, he was no less devoted to study. He corrected "all the books of the Old and New Testaments," as well as many of the Fathers. His alms amounted every year, it is said, to five hundred pounds. A large hospital of stone for the sick, and some houses of timber for lepers, were among the numerous proofs of his abundant charity.†

* Ord. Vit. l. vii. 15.

† Ead. Hist. Nov. l. i. pp. 13, 14, &c.; Crisp's Lanfranc, ap. Mabill. ix. 36, p. 654.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TYRANNY OF RUFUS—HIS SICKNESS AND REPENTANCE—ELECTION OF ST. ANSELM TO THE SEE OF CANTERBURY.

RUFUS immediately let out the possessions of the see of Canterbury to the highest bidder. The lease was renewed annually for five years in the same manner. The cloisters of the monks resounded with the commands or threats of the new tenants. The religious were for the most part dispersed. Dilapidation, waste, confusion, everywhere.

Each see and abbey that became vacant was reduced to the same desolate "widowhood." It was to no purpose that the noblest in the land entreated the king to take pity on the widowhood of the Church of Canterbury. He declared "by the holy face of Lucca" (the usual oath of this impious man) that no one should be archbishop but himself. The prayers of all the Church in England were now rising in one solemn formula to a higher throne, and were speedily heard. The tyrant, while at Gloucester, is stricken down by sickness. The bishops, abbots, and nobles assemble, expecting his death. It is suggested to the sick man to provide for his salvation by giving liberty to the Church, forgiving debts, and opening his dungeons. The king assents, and sends a charter to this effect, written and sealed as usual, to be placed upon the altar.*

Urged, in the next place, to do his duty with regard to the see of Canterbury, he assented, commanding the rulers of the Church to elect an archbishop. They joyfully assembled, and chose the learned St. Anselm. St. Anselm long refused the appointment. The

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. i. pp. 14—16.

bishops implored and remonstrated: "Why do you resist God, when you could restore liberty to the churches? Why do you prefer your own ease?" "Bear with me, bear with me," cried out the saint; "I am an old man, and too weak for earthly labour. How, then, can I undertake to labour for the whole Church in England?" Scarcely listening to his words, they hurried him to the bedside of the king, that he might receive, by the delivery of the pastoral staff, the investiture of the archbishopric. The abbot could never admit the king's right thus to invest. He struggled on the way to the palace with all his strength; and, being forced along, he remained deaf to entreaty. The words and entreaties of the king, sick as he was, were unavailing. The bishops now began to feel some indignation: they told the abbot, that now the oppression of the Church would be imputed to him. At last, at the king's suggestion, they prostrated before the inflexible abbot. He was not to be thus outdone; he himself did the same before them. As if losing patience, they now took his right arm, and, with no small effort, forced back one or two of the fingers, and held the pastoral staff in his hand. Immediately all present began the "Te Deum," and hurried him off to the church. "What you do is nothing; what you do is nothing," he cried out, as they forced him along. As soon as the ceremony was over, he returned to the king (March 6th, A.D. 1093): "I tell you, my lord the king, that you will not die of this illness; and therefore I wish you to know that you can easily alter what has been done in my regard." His remonstrance was unavailing. Although his bold language to the nobles and bishops, as they conducted him from the palace, must have reached the king's ears, it was equally useless. "What are you doing?" he had exclaimed; "you are yoking to one plough a wild bull and a wretched feeble sheep. God is the husbandman, and that plough is the Church: it was drawn in England by two stout oxen—the king, with secular justice and power, and

the archbishop of Canterbury with divine knowledge and superintendence. One of them survives, endued with all the ferocity of a wild bull. You understand me. I am that feeble sheep. After he has crushed me, he will, most assuredly, not hesitate to trample upon you."

Before the consecration took place, the king's danger had passed away, and with it, unfortunately, his desire of amendment. He immediately ordered the captives, who were still in his dungeons, to be more closely confined, and those that were already free, to be again secured. In short, "every evil" that he had committed before his illness appeared good, we are assured, in comparison with his present wickedness. Whilst the king thus abandoned himself to the frightful reaction, too natural to such a character, St. Anselm approached, and calmly laid down the only conditions on which he would consent to be consecrated. "I wish," he said, "that all the lands should be restored which were held by Lanfranc, as well as those that were held by his predecessors, and not restored to him, and that you should act towards me with rectitude and justice. I wish, too, that in all things which belong to God and to Christianity, you would intrust yourself to my counsel above others; and, as I wish to hold you for my earthly lord and protector, so do you hold me for your spiritual father, and the guardian of your soul. Concerning Urban, the Roman bishop, whom you have refused to acknowledge as apostolic prelate, and whom I have acknowledged, and do still acknowledge,* I caution you against any scandal that may arise. On these points, I beseech you to make known your opinion, in order that I may know what measures to adopt." Being quite at a loss what to reply, William at last said that he would consider the matter, and St. Anselm rejoiced at the prospect of escape. "The

* Henry IV. of Germany had set up an anti-Pope against St. Gregory VII., who at this time still continued his schism. He died in 1100: see also p. 266.

clamours of the whole nation, lamenting the ruin of the churches," subdued the obstinacy of even such a king as Rufus: at a great council at Winchester, he promised everything, and the poor abbot of Bec "goes to Canterbury for consecration" (A.D. 1093).

Just before the "examination" of St. Anselm, the bishop of London, according to custom, read aloud the account of the election (December 4th, 1093).^{*} Having recited the words "metropolitan of all Britain," he was stopped by the archbishop of York: if the church of Canterbury were the metropolitan church of all Britain, that of York could not be metropolitan, although it was evident that it really was. After a brief discussion, the word "primate" was substituted for metropolitan, and the archbishop of York was satisfied.[†]

It soon became evident that St. Anselm was indeed yoked to a "wild bull." He was persuaded to offer William a present of five hundred pounds of silver.[‡] It was William's custom, when he wished that a free gift should be increased, to reject the offer with scorn until his wish was gratified. His flatterers found it no difficult matter to urge him to behave in like manner towards the archbishop. The king's avarice for once, however, became its own punishment. "If you treat me as a freeman and a friend," returned the undaunted prelate, "you may make use of me and mine; but on slavish conditions you shall have neither me nor mine." "Keep your gifts and your words to yourself," cried the enraged king; "my own are enough for me: begone."[§]

^{*} The consecration of a bishop was preceded by various moving ceremonies. The first of these was the "evening scrutiny" into the nature of the election. In former times this took place on the Saturday evening. In the course of the subsequent ceremonies occurred the "examination" in matters of faith, &c.—See Roman Pontifical.

[†] Ead. Hist. Nov. l. i. pp. 16—21.

[‡] A thousand, according to John of Salisbury; ap. Whart. ii. p. 163.

[§] Ead. pp. 21, 22, ap. Selden; Ord. Vit. l. viii. pp. 8 and 9.

At this time, "Wulstan, of blessed memory," the aged Anglo-Saxon bishop, was still living, and being very learned in the customs of the ancient churches of England, was now consulted by St. Anselm. "Hesitate not," wrote back the only survivor of the old Saxon prelates, "hesitate not: let not the fear of secular power depress you, nor its favours turn you aside; but begin courageously, and with God's help courageously finish. Withstand those that rebel; put down oppressors, and against such men defend our holy Mother."*

* Ead. pp. 22, &c.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ST. ANSELM'S OPPOSITION TO THE EFFEMINACY OF THE COURT—HE REMONSTRATES WITH RUFUS ON THE OPPRESSION OF THE CHURCH, AND THE CONSEQUENT INCREASE OF SIN—THE KING'S "CUSTOMS"—COUNCIL AT ROCKINGHAM CASTLE—ARTIFICES AND VIOLENCE OF RUFUS, AND SUBSERVIENCY OF MOST OF THE BISHOPS—ARRIVAL OF A LEGATE—HIS FIRMNESS AND SUCCESS.

THE remainder of St. Anselm's life was an almost incessant struggle for the freedom of Holy Church. The Crown, casting aside the fear of God, aimed especially at two objects; to hamper communications with the Holy See, and then to make the bishoprics its own fiefs, to be bestowed upon its most obsequious servants, or to be farmed out as a productive source of revenue. The contest that arose is interesting, not only from its own merits, but because from that century even to this, it has been, again and again, renewed. Its minutest details deserve a careful study.

Not long after St. Wulstan had despatched his letter to St. Anselm, William assembled a large army at Hastings, for the purpose of invading Normandy. He was detained for a month by contrary winds. During this time, St. Anselm and most of the bishops attended the camp, in order to bless the expedition. Meantime, the see of Lincoln being vacant, and Robert Bloet being chosen to fill it, he was consecrated by St. Anselm in the church of Our Lady, within the castle walls. To the watchfulness of some of the courtiers, both nobles and prelates, it appeared that Rufus was displeased with this consecration. They, too, immediately began to find fault; but Rufus, whether in earnest or not, told them that to lessen the dignity of Canterbury, the mother-church, was far from being his wish.

Invidious remarks, whether encouraged or repressed, could not deter the saint from the path of duty. The Conqueror, whatever his faults, was a lover of chastity: his court was, therefore, seldom outraged by any impropriety. Not so Rufus: the manners of the court, when presided over by this monster of lust, were too gross for description. What, however, struck the eyes of every one, was the effeminate dress and gait, and "irreligious nods," of Rufus's attendants and companions, as well as their habit of having their hair curled and tricked out in the fashion of the young ladies of that age. St. Anselm, on Ash-Wednesday, apparently whilst still at Hastings, zealously denounced these unchristian manners. Those that still persisted in wearing their hair in the fashion of women, instead of that of men, were not allowed to receive the ashes, nor "the blessing of his absolution."

Being well aware, however, that if the king's life were regular, these scandals would cease, he one day went to him, according to custom, and sitting by his side, thus addressed him: "My lord the king, you are about to cross the sea, and to endeavour to subjugate Normandy: I beseech you to render help, first of all, to perishing Christianity in this kingdom." "What help?" inquired Rufus. "Let councils, according to ancient usage, be renewed; let that which has been wickedly done, be brought under discussion, rebuked, and put down; a general council of the English bishops has not been held during all your reign, nor for many years before. Innumerable crimes have been the consequence; and they grow by impunity." "This is my affair, and not yours," said the king; adding with a sneer, "What would you speak of in the council?" "To be silent about the illicit marriages of relatives," said the archbishop, "that most abominable crime of sodomy, lately become a public evil in this land, has very greatly increased. Unless it be cut short by sentence from you, and by the vigour of ecclesiastical discipline, the

whole land will soon be one Sodom. But let us exert ourselves conjointly, you by the regal power, and I by pontifical authority, in such a manner, that the mightiest abettor of such guilt may tremble and succumb." "And why should this be done for you?" "If not for me," said the archbishop, "I hope it will be done for God and for you." "Enough," said the monarch, "it is my will that you say no more about it." After a pause, St. Anselm observed: "There is another thing; how many abbeys are destitute of pastors; how many monks, quitting their monasteries, live in the luxuries of the world, and die without confession. I advise, I beseech, and I warn you to look well to this matter, lest you bring down upon yourself damnation." "Are not the abbeys mine?" broke out the king; "do not you do as you like with your farms? and shall not I do as I like with my abbeys?" "They are yours," replied St. Anselm, "to defend and preserve as a protector, but not to invade and devastate. We know that they are God's; that they are for the support of his ministers, not for carrying on your wars and expeditions. You have farms, villas, and ample revenues for your affairs; restore, then, to the churches what belongs to them." "Your predecessor would not have dared to utter such things to my father," rejoined the monarch.

Finding it useless to remonstrate, St. Anselm withdrew, and made the bishops his mediators. Learning, however, that an abundant present was still expected, he plainly told them that he would give nothing; and that the chief part of what he had previously offered, was already given to the poor. When the king heard this, he replied: "Yesterday I hated him, but to-day I hate him more; and every day henceforth my hatred shall be more bitter and intense. I will hold him no longer for my father and archbishop. I execrate his prayers and benedictions."*

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. i. pp. 22—25; Flor. of Worc. A.D. 1097. Such words as "a curia discessimus," here and elsewhere often used, point out Eadmer himself as being an eye-witness of what he writes.

A few years before this, the emperor Henry, who seems to have been Rufus's model, had marched into Italy, driven St. Gregory from Rome, and even dared to set up an anti-pope, under the name of Clement. St. Gregory dying soon after, and Henry being defeated and expelled from Italy, a lawful Pope, Victor III., was duly elected; and Victor dying in the course of a few months, Urban II canonically succeeded. Except those that were under the direct influence of the German emperor, few, indeed, were to be found that questioned the legitimate title of Urban.

Accordingly, St. Anselm went to Ilingham, a royal villa near Shaftesbury, and made known his intention of going to Pope Urban, to receive the pallium. The monarch replied, that he himself had not as yet acknowledged him. He added, that it had neither been his custom, nor that of his father, to allow any one to be acknowledged as Pope, without his licence. He would consider any attempt to deprive him of this custom, as one and the same thing as to deprive him of his crown. St. Anselm replied, that it was well known that, when only abbot of Bec, he had acknowledged Pope Urban, and that he could not recede from his obedience. Falling now into one of his usual paroxysms of anger, William exclaimed, that the archbishop could by no means keep faith towards his king, and at the same time obedience to the Pope against the king's will. The saint requested the furious monarch to give him a respite, and to call together the bishops, abbots, and nobles, of the entire kingdom, that it might be defined whether he could be faithful to the king, without infringing obedience to the Pope. "If it be shown," he added, "that both cannot be by any means, I confess I prefer to quit your land, until you acknowledge the Pope, rather than refuse obedience, even for an hour, to St. Peter and his Vicar."*

The proposed council was summoned to Rocking-

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. i. pp. 25 and 26.

ham Castle. The church within the fortress was the place of meeting. A great multitude, both of clergy and laity, were present; but the king and his nobles were consulting together in one of the rooms of the castle.

St. Anselm narrated to his fellow-bishops the conversation between himself and the king. He then reminded them that it was only by their compulsion, and by his confidence in their future co-operation, that he had consented to become their archbishop. That assistance on which he had relied, was now greatly needed. He concluded by entreating all, but especially his fellow-bishops, to give him such advice as would neither militate against obedience to the Pope, nor infringe upon his fidelity to the king.

The bishops, unhappily, had not the firmness suitable to their office. They wished to leave him to take his own unaided resolve: if he abided (they said) by the king's will, he would do what would be useful; if he sought from them counsel "according to God," he sought it in vain, he must depend on himself.

"Since, then," replied St. Anselm, "you who are the pastors and princes of the people, give me no other counsel but what is according to the will of one man, I will run to the supreme pastor and prince of all—to the angel of the great council, and from him shall receive advice which I will follow. The keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the promises of never being conquered by the gates of hell, and of holding Christ's place in such a manner, that they being despised, Christ declared himself despised, were given principally to Peter, and in him to the other Apostles; in like manner, principally to blessed Peter's vicar, and through him to the other bishops; and not to any emperor, nor to any king, nor to a duke, nor to a count. In him, nevertheless, we ought to be subject, and to minister, to earthly princes: 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.' Know then all of you, that in the things that are God's, I will render obedience to the

vicar of blessed Peter; and in what rightly appertains to the dignity of my earthly lord, I will, according to my ability, give counsel and help.”*

The bishops at once arose, and after a confused and loud conversation among themselves, turned angrily to their primate, and telling him that they would not carry his message to the king, departed. St. Anselm, therefore, followed them into the king's presence, repeated what he had said, and returned. So long, meantime, was the debate continued before the king, that St. Anselm was noticed to lean back upon the wall just behind his archiepiscopal throne, and sink into a light slumber.

The bishops, at last, returned. “Know,” they said, “that the whole kingdom complains that you are endeavouring to take the crown and the ornament of the empire from our common lord; for whoever takes the customs of the royal dignity, takes away, at the same time, the crown and kingdom. Urban can be of no service to you; nor can he be of any detriment if you make peace with the king. Then shake off his yoke, and being free as is becoming in an archbishop of Canterbury, abide the will and command of the king. Consent to all his requests like a prudent man, that he may pardon, and that your enemies, who now insult in your houses, may blush at your restoration. Such is our advice, as quite necessary for you and yours.”

What a speech for bishops—to appeal to mere feelings instead of principles! What a mixture of sophistry and flattery: free as becomes the archbishop; to act a prudent part, and thus to be secure and triumphant over those that were rioting on the property of his church! It is scarcely credible, and yet too true. Brief was the answer of St. Anselm: “I hear what you say; but, to be silent about other matters, I will by no means refuse obedience to our lord the Pope. The day is now declining; let the question, please, be deferred. To-morrow I will

* Gest. et Vita Sti. Ans. l. i. c. 4, pp. 880 and 902.

answer according to what God will vouchsafe to inspire."

The bishops suspected that he was hesitating through perplexity or fear; and therefore advised the king to give him no respite, but at once to pronounce sentence. "Know," they horribly said, returning to St. Anselm, "the king has invoked upon himself the hatred of God Almighty, and we support his imprecation, if he give you a truce for even one hour. Answer forthwith: do not think it a trifle, since you have sullied your plighted faith." St. Anselm replied: "If any one wishes to show that by observing obedience to the most high bishop of the venerable, holy Roman Church, I must violate my fealty and oath to my earthly king, let him stand forward, and in the name of the Lord he will find me ready to give a becoming answer."

The bishops were disconcerted; they gazed at one another, and then suddenly remembering that they could not canonically judge, much less condemn, their primate, they went to the king for an answer. In the interval, a general but suppressed murmur arose in the church; but, at first, no one dared openly to express his sentiments, until a knight advanced from the dense crowd, and clasping the knees of the saint, exclaimed: "My lord, your children earnestly entreat you through me not to allow your heart to be troubled by what you have heard; but remember Job on his dunghill vanquishing the devil, and avenging Adam whom he had conquered in Paradise."

When the discomfited prelates, meantime, entered the king's presence, he cried out: "What is the meaning of this? Did you not promise that you would, at my option, treat, judge, and condemn him?"

They remained silent. William of Durham, the fomentor of all the persecution, stammered out, at last, "It is night. Allow us to return to our lodgings, in order that, knowing fully his reasons, we may think for you even till morning." Such words were

hardly to be expected after the recent clamour for an immediate sentence. But the time-serving prelates were perfectly confounded. The king consented.

In the morning Rufus demanded of William of Durham, what had passed in the night. The wretched man acknowledged that he had nothing to say against St. Anselm's reasons; "especially since all his reasoning is founded upon the word of God, and the authority of blessed Peter;" and yet he had the baseness to advise that his archbishop "should be overcome by violence, and in the event of his not submitting to the king's will, that he should be deprived of his ring and crosier, and expelled the kingdom." Hearing such a speech, the nobles present were disgusted, and took no pains to conceal their disgust.

Perceiving their displeasure, Rufus asked them what else they would have. "I will not have an equal in my own kingdom. If you knew that his cause was so reasonable, why did you allow me to begin this assize against him? Go; deliberate: because, by the face of God, if you will not condemn him according to my will, I will condemn you."

Robert, one of the king's most intimate friends, replied: "I confess I do not know what to say about our deliberations. For after we had spent a day in endeavouring to form some consistent accusation, he himself, thinking no evil in return, falls asleep, and blows away with one effort of his lips all the spider's web that was cast before him."

The king turned from the nobles to the bishops. "What do you say?" "We grieve that we cannot satisfy your desire, my lord. He is primate not only of this kingdom, but of Scotland and Ireland, and the adjacent islands; and we are his suffragans. We cannot reasonably judge him even if some fault could be proved against him."

"What remains then? If you cannot judge him, can you not refuse him all obedience and friendship?" said the king. "We can, since you command it," said the poor spiritless creatures. "Go, then,"

was the rejoinder, "do quickly what you say: to make a beginning, I put him out of my protection."

Having received their message, St. Anselm replied: "Since you refuse me obedience because I keep my fidelity and obedience to blessed Peter, you do not act rightly. Far be it from me to repay like for like: as you have fallen through fear, I will do what I can to recall you to the way of rectitude; and since the king has removed from me his protection, and refuses to hold me as his archbishop and spiritual father, I will pledge myself to fidelity to him, and if he will allow me, will exert a father's care for his salvation, always retaining, however, in the service of God, the name, power, and office of a bishop."

When this answer was made known to Rufus, he required his nobles to imitate the bishops; and renounce the fealty and friendship of St. Anselm. They replied that they could not renounce a fealty which they had never promised. "He is our archbishop," they continued; "he has to govern Christianity in this land; and in this matter we, who are Christians, cannot, as long as we live, turn aside from his rule, particularly as there is upon him no stain of any offence to compel you to treat him otherwise."

A declaration thus true and fearless struck the whole council itself as a striking contrast to the words and actions of the bishops. The latter, with all eyes fixed upon them, sat cowering under their well-merited shame; while some of the nobles, as they turned first to one bishop, and then to another, pronounced indignantly the names of Pilate, Herod, and Judas the Traitor.

The king, however, was unwilling to see them shamed into what was right. He asked them, one by one, whether they would renounce, unconditionally, all subjection and obedience to St. Anselm, or would renounce that only which he claimed on the authority of the Pope. Those that promised to renounce utterly and unconditionally, received the honour of being seated by his side. Those that wished to extend

their disobedience no farther than to what was enjoined by the Pope, were ordered as traitors, or rather like naughty boys at school, to go and stand in a distant corner. Trembling and confused, they not only obeyed, but actually purchased the king's forbearance by the promise of an ample present. One would think, that they must have rued their earlier obsequiousness.

Rufus was now perplexed by a message from St. Anselm, demanding a safe-conduct through his dominions. The king wished him to depart, but not until he had been stripped of the archiepiscopal dignity. He pretended, therefore, that he was extremely anxious to renew their former friendship; and proposed a "truce" till the following Whitsuntide. St. Anselm suspected the king's meaning in such a peace; but that he might not appear too much attached to his own opinion, he said that he would consent; "always saving the reverence and obedience due to the Lord Urban, the bishop of the Apostolic See."* The nature of the "truce" was but too soon apparent: the lands of the archbishop were pillaged as if he were a public enemy, his vassals were carried off, and Baldwin, his chamberlain and confidential adviser, was expelled from the country.

The king, meantime, had formed his plan; and a most unscrupulous one it proved. He thought it possible to make the Pope himself the instrument of his royal caprice. If he acknowledged Urban to be the true Pope, Urban, he fancied, would, in return, send the pallium, not to St. Anselm, but to himself, with permission to bestow it at his own discretion. For this purpose he despatched Gerard and William, two of his chaplains, to Rome. Urban knew his duty too well to allow the pallium to pass into such hands. He chose as his legate for its due transmission Walter, the bishop of Alba, a discreet and holy man. Arriving in England, the legate said nothing, and did nothing for the oppressed archbishop (A.D. 1095).

Ever prone to judge before they clearly know, men

* Ead. Hist. Nov. pp. 26—31, Seld.

began to whisper that the legate had been bought by the king; and, as if it were an unquestionable fact, to exclaim, "Well! what shall we say? If Rome prefers gold and silver to justice, what aid, what counsel, what solace shall those in their oppression find henceforth, who have nothing to give for the vindication of their cause?"

Seeing that the legate had made no opposition to his wishes, Rufus seemed inclined to forget the failure of his plan. He first acknowledged, in presence of his great council, that Urban was the lawful Pope, and then solicited from Walter the deposition of the archbishop. All his efforts for this purpose, however, as well as his promises of large sums of money, and an annual revenue to the Holy See, were equally fruitless. The maligned legate had accomplished the chief part of his mission—had procured the acknowledgment of Pope Urban. Whether he had a reasonable prospect of obtaining redress for St. Anselm may be strongly doubted. To be made an instrument of tyranny, however, he resolutely refused. It was, perhaps, this firmness, no less than what Eadmer mentions,—the advice of the nobles, that now produced an unconditional reconciliation. It took place at Windsor. Whilst the king, by his familiar conversation with the primate, was showing publicly that peace was restored, Walter, the legate, made his appearance, and congratulated St. Anselm. Those who had begun to look with distrust upon the legate, and, amongst the rest, Eadmer himself, were greatly surprised. They must have been still more so at Walter's subsequent firmness. A question arose concerning the pallium. Some craftily proposed that Walter should do honour to Rufus by bestowing it through the king's hands. Walter refused; and by solid reasoning proved that this belonged, not to the kingly dignity, but to the authority of St. Peter. No objection was made, the whole assembly remaining in profound silence. It was finally agreed, that no further opposition should be offered; but that whoever had brought the pallium to

England should place it upon the altar of Christ's Church, Canterbury. St. Anselm, according to custom, was to take it from the altar as if from the hands of St. Peter himself.*

While St. Anselm was on his way towards Canterbury, two of the bishops, Robert of Hereford and Osmund of Salisbury, followed him, "doing penance,"† says Eadmer, for their fault at Rockingham. The saint took pity on them; led them into a little church on the roadside, and absolved them. There also he restored to Wilfrid, bishop of St. David's, what he had before withdrawn from him,—the exercise of his episcopal jurisdiction.

Arriving at Canterbury, he approached the altar, not only with bare head and hands, according to the usual rite, but even with bare feet, in order thus, with greater reverence, to take from the altar the pallium, the consecrated badge of the plenitude of episcopal authority.

* Ead. pp. 31—34; Waver. Ann.

† "Pœnitentiam apud illum agentes."—Ib. p. 34.

CHAPTER XXX.

ST. ANSELM'S CONTEST WITH RUFUS AND HIS COURTIER'S AT WINCHESTER—HIS PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY SEE—HE IS MOST HONOURABLY ENTERTAINED BY THE POPE—ASSISTS WITH SIGNAL MARKS OF HONOUR AT THE COUNCIL OF BARI—HIS SOJOURN AND WRITINGS AT LYONS—DEATH OF RUFUS.

ALTHOUGH the king's plan against St. Anselm had thus failed, it was too obvious that his malice was unchanged. He knew of the oppression of the church of Canterbury by some of his vassals, but turned a deaf ear to the archbishop's remonstrances.

Seeing this, and seeing, too, the general decay of discipline, the pillage of churches and monasteries, and the fearful increase of immorality, St. Anselm feared that all this would bring down some judgment upon his own head. He therefore sought help in prayer, and, after long deliberation, resolved to appeal to the Holy See.*

He again and again asked permission to go to Rome. The answer given to the nobles, on one of these occasions, is characteristic:—"We do not think that he has committed so great a sin," said the sneering king, "as to require the Pope's absolution." Invited, at length, to the royal presence at Winchester, he took the opportunity to renew his petition. Hearing afterwards that William complained of his importunity, he returned for answer: "I wish to go to Rome for the sake of holy Christianity, which I have undertaken to rule in this land, for the salvation of my soul; and, if he chooses to believe it, for his honour and profit. If he will give me leave, I will accept it most gratefully; if he refuse, I must obey God rather than man" (October 15th, 1097).

* Ead. Hist. Nov. pp. 35 and 37.

The bishop of Winchester, who was present, together with three other prelates, made the following most unbrotherly answer:—"Indeed, the king and his barons believe that you are not easily moved to abandon what you have once begun; but in this, viz., that, despising the honour and utility of such an episcopal charge, you should go to Rome, it is not easy to believe that you remain fixed." St. Anselm looked with a kindling glance upon the speaker, whose meaning he well understood, and said, "Fixed, assuredly." He then called the four bishops around him, and requested their advice. They withdrew, as if to deliberate, but in reality to ask the king for an answer. Having obtained such a one as suited the sarcastic mind of Rufus, they informed St. Anselm that "they knew him to be a religious and holy man," whose "conversation was in Heaven;" but that they, having relations to support, and being entangled in the business of the world, could not reach the height of his sanctity: he must descend to them, and do as they did. "You have spoken well," was the reply; "go then to your Lord; I will cling to God."

Some of the nobles then came and charged the saint, in the king's name, with having, by a threat of going to Rome without leave, violated his promise to observe the king's customs and laws. When they had finished, St. Anselm, accompanied by his attendant clergy, followed them into Rufus's presence, and taking his accustomed seat on the king's right hand, thus addressed him: "I confess that what you say is true, that I promised to keep your usages and customs; viz., that I would keep, according to God, what you possess in your kingdom, in rectitude, and according to God." The king and his nobles exclaimed together, that he had said nothing about God or rectitude. The archbishop interrupted their outcries: "Strange enough!" said he. "If there were no mention of God or rectitude, what does it signify? Far be it from every Christian, far be it, to hold or maintain any customs that are known to be contrary

to God and rectitude." These words had their effect : what before was a loud outcry now became a hesitating murmur ; but many a fierce look and tossing head told plainly how little the assembly relished the admonition.

"But why do you declare," resumed the archbishop, "that it is not your custom that I should go to blessed Peter and his vicar, for the sake of my soul's salvation, and for the sake of the government of the Church of God, which I have undertaken ? This custom I pronounce to be contrary to rectitude and to God ; and I therefore declare, that it must be spurned and rejected by every servant of God. Do you object that I do not keep my faith ? The faith that is pledged to man takes its efficacy from the faith which is due to God : it is plain, that if the same faith be contrary to God, it altogether loses its force. The faith which I owe to God compels me to go to the Pope. You, O king, would not allow any of your powerful vassals to impede his men from doing what was for your service and profit : you would avenge yourself upon such a one for a violation of his fealty."

"Oh ! oh !" broke out the king and the Earl Robert de Mellent, his chief adviser, "it is a sermon that he is giving, a sermon ; but nothing for sensible men about the point in question." Many an exclamation was added from various nobles. Amidst the general uproar, the primate sat quiet, with serene aspect and downcast eyes, from time to time endeavouring to make himself heard, and again resuming the most perfect composure. The tumult at last subsiding, he added : "You wish me to swear never, on any account, to appeal in England to blessed Peter or his vicar ; this, I say, ought not to be the command of you who are a Christian ; for to swear this is to abjure blessed Peter. He who abjures blessed Peter, undoubtedly abjures Christ, who made him prince over His Church. When, therefore, for your sake, O king, I shall have abjured Christ, I confess I will,

without delay, amend, by the judgment of your court, the sin which I committed in asking leave."

"Hey-day! hey-day!" said the angry De Mellent, "you will present yourself to Peter and the Pope; and that which we know will not escape us."

"God indeed knows what will remain for you," said the archbishop. "He will also be able to assist me, if it be His will, when hastening to the threshold of the Apostles." He then quitted the council, but soon returned, and having again seated himself, exclaimed, with a bright, smiling countenance: "I am going, my lord; but not knowing when I shall see you again, I will give you my blessing, if you have no objection." William answering that he had none, and bowing his head, the archbishop arose, blessed him, and departed (October, A.D. 1097).

Having arranged his affairs at Canterbury, St. Anselm took the scrip and staff of a pilgrim, and departed, amidst the lamentations of his people. While Rufus was confiscating the property of his see, and ordering all his statutes to be considered null, he himself had landed at Whitsand, in Flanders; lodged some days at St. Bertin's monastery, in St. Omer's, consecrating, meanwhile, the altar of St. Lawrence, in St. Omer's church; spent his Christmas in the vast and fervent monastery of Clugny, and the greater part of Lent with his friend Hugo, archbishop of Lyons; and thus, escaping the snares of some malicious persons, and being everywhere welcomed from town to town, with procession, and banner, and sound of trumpet, the persecuted, but faithful and patient archbishop, arrived at last at the tombs of the blessed Apostles.*

The letters of Rufus were already there; and his gifts were showered upon all that were likely to oppose St. Anselm. The cause, however, of the holy archbishop was manifest, was triumphant. His entreaty to resign was not listened to: "O bishop, O pastor," said the Pope, "you have not yet endured

* Ead. Hist. Nov. pp. 37—45.

wounds or death, and do you desire to fly from the care of the Lord's fold? Christ proves the love of Peter towards Himself, in the care of His sheep: and Anselm, Anselm, I say, that holy one, that man so eminent and great, longing only for repose, does not fear, even before a battle, to expose the sheep of Christ to be torn in pieces by the jaws of wolves. On the part of Almighty God, in the place of blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, I command you through holy obedience, I command you not to cast off the care which has been confided to you, of the kingdom of England. If, by the tyranny of its ruler, you are not allowed to return, still be always its archbishop, possessing over it as long as you live, the power of binding and loosing; and, wherever you are, using the episcopal insignia in the manner of its highest pontiff." St. Anselm assented; and then stated briefly that the bishops of England had urged upon him, that if he would not violate his fealty to the king, he must renounce obedience to blessed Peter; and asked what he was to do. The Pope desired him to appear at a council that was going to be held in the church of St. Stephen, at Bari, "before the body of blessed Nicholas." The holy man withdrew; and rejecting ample offers of pecuniary assistance, went to his friend and former pupil, the Abbot John, and, in cheerful poverty, lodged on his farm at Selavi, on the summit of one of the Apennines.

The object for which a council had been summoned to meet at Bari, was to confute the error of the Greeks, who asserted that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father only. The Greek schism, begun in the ninth century by Photius, the eunuch, had died with that turbulent man. About the time, however, when Lanfranc was confuting Berengarius, Michael Cerularius, the patriarch of Constantinople, had renewed the schism, drawing into it a great part of the Greek races. The schism, as usual, soon ripened into heresy. To condemn the latter, was the object

of the present synod (A.D. 1098). In the midst of the discussion, the Pope cried out: "My father and master, Anselm, where are you?" The archbishop, according to his rank, was seated amongst the principal assessors, with Eadmer, his constant companion, sitting at his feet. The Pope made them place a seat at his own side, and bade St. Anselm occupy it, and address the assembly in defence of his "mother," the holy Church. As all were wondering who he that had received so signal a mark of honour could be, Urban explained himself, narrating, at full length, the history of his persecutions. St. Anselm then delivered a masterly address. When he had finished, the Pope exclaimed: "Blessed be your heart and understanding; and may your mouth, and the words of your mouth, be blessed." The Pope then addressed the council; and the error was finally stricken with anathema. At the request of many friends, St. Anselm afterwards embodied the arguments of his oration in a most learned treatise on the Procession of the Holy Ghost, which was circulated widely even in the Eastern regions.

When the Greek error had thus been condemned, the council deliberated upon the state of the English Church. As William Rufus, although thrice cautioned, had refused to submit, it was agreed that "the sword of St. Peter" should strike him with its anathema. At this decision, St. Anselm arose, and falling upon his knees before the Pope, who was on the point of pronouncing sentence, besought him to refrain. The Pope, with much reluctance, consented; and, accompanied by St. Anselm, returned to Rome.*

Every incident that now arose connected with England, served only to show how incorrigible was the tyranny of William Rufus. A messenger from the Holy See having presented to the king a letter from the Pope, presented another from St. Anselm. The latter was rejected. The messenger being discovered to be a vassal of St. Anselm, the king threatened with

* Ead. l. ii. pp. 45—51.

an oath, that he would tear out his eyes, unless he at once quitted his dominions.

When the king's letters arrived, they contained in substance but one charge against St. Anselm,—that he *would* visit Rome. The Pope was amazed. He granted the king a respite, however, from the Christmas, which he was then celebrating, to the following Michaelmas. Eadmer knew that Rufus's messengers were lavish of their master's gifts; and he concludes that it was the artful advice of these men that swayed the Pope's determination. As he produces no facts to prove this, we must suppose that he knew of none. St. Anselm's entreaty not to proceed to extremities, would be sufficient to account for the Pope's consent; even had not the contest for investitures with the German emperors, completely engrossed the attention of the Holy See.

In a council soon after held at Rome, the bishop of Lucca strongly called attention to the case of St. Anselm; * but, at that moment, the question of investitures, the object for which the council had been called, was of paramount importance. Excommunication was pronounced by the Pope and council against all laymen that should confer, and all persons that should receive from their hands, the investiture of churches; as well as all that should consecrate to an office thus given; or should become liege-men of laics for ecclesiastical honours.†

St. Anselm soon after quitted Rome; and again took up his abode in Lyons. Continuing there his beloved occupation of prayer and study, he added to the many brief works which he had already composed,

* He says it was "the second year after his arrival" at Rome. St. Anselm left England towards the close of 1097; reached Clugny by Christmas; was at Lyons in Lent; at Rome about Midsummer; at Bari in October; and at Rome when Rufus's gifts were artfully distributed at Christmas. These events show that Labbe was mistaken in assigning 1097 as the date of the Council of Bari; and no less so in assigning 1098, instead of 1099, as the term of the respite granted to Rufus by the subsequent Council at Rome.

† Ead. Hist. Nov. pp. 51—53; Flor. of Wore. A.D. 1098 and 1099.

a treatise entitled, "De Conceptu Virginali et Originali Peccato." It is clear and profound; and like other parts of his writings, frequently displays no slight resemblance to the systematic arrangement of St. Thomas's Summa. Of his other works, the principal are his Monology, or Soliloquy, which he submitted to Lanfranc's correction, and his Proslogium, a kind of colloquy with God. Both are of a metaphysical caste; containing, the latter especially, some striking reflections, and glowing with devotion.* When he had finished his treatise, and had now spent more than a year in Lyons, two monks, one of Canterbury, and the other of Bec, arrived with the startling news that Rufus was dead. He had gone out to hunt in the New Forest; and had there been found weltering in his blood, with the feathered part of an arrow protruding from his breast. St. Anselm was greatly distressed: bitter tears gushed from his eyes; and when Eadmer and others expressed their surprise, he exclaimed, with a voice broken with sobs, that he would rather have died himself.

Returning to England, he was greatly instrumental in securing the throne to Henry.

* See his Works, p. 97, and Introduction—Censura; edited by the Maurists, Paris, 1721.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CHARTER OF HENRY I.—HE CLAIMS THE INVESTITURE OF ALL PRELATES—REPLY OF POPE PASCHAL—EMBASSY TO ROME—EXTRAORDINARY SCENE ON ITS RETURN—DEPOSITION OF SIX ABBOTS AND THREE ABBOTS ELECT, CHIEFLY FOR SIMONY—CANONS OF WESTMINSTER FOR ENFORCING CELIBACY AND THE USE OF THE TONSURE AND OF AN ECCLESIASTICAL DRESS, AND FOR SUPPRESSING SIMONY AND THE SALE OF HUMAN BEINGS—HENRY GIVES INVESTITURE BY RING AND STAFF—FAILS TO PROCURE FOR SUCH THE EPISCOPAL CONSECRATION—INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE IN THESE PROCEEDINGS, AND APPLAUSE WHEN THE KING AND HIS EPISCOPAL ADHERENTS WERE DEFEATED—ST. ANSELM'S INTERPOSITION AND SECOND APPEAL AND JOURNEY TO ROME—THE POPE EXCOMMUNICATES THOSE THAT RECEIVED THE INVESTITURE—HENRY'S VENGEANCE—MISERY OF HIS PEOPLE—HIS NEW SOURCE OF REVENUE—LAMENTATIONS OF THE BISHOPS, AND THEIR ENTREATY TO ST. ANSELM TO RETURN—HENRY RELENTS—TERMS OF THE RECONCILIATION—EFFORTS FOR THE RESTORATION OF DISCIPLINE—ERECTION OF THE SEE OF ELY—DEATH OF ST. ANSELM.

THE new king had promised to preserve the good laws, and to destroy all the oppression and injustice, whether in church or secular matters, that had arisen under his brother Rufus. This promise, signed and sealed, (forming what is called Henry's Charter,) was renewed after St. Anselm's arrival. "I set free the Holy Church of God, so that I will neither sell nor farm out, nor, on the death of archbishop, bishop, or abbot, will I receive anything from the property of the Church, or its vassals, until a successor enters it."* St. Anselm had not, however, returned many days, when he was told that he was to receive from the king the investiture of his archbishopric. Alleging the authority of the Roman Council, the saint firmly refused. Henry took no pains to conceal his anger, and declared that he would forfeit half his kingdom

* Ex. lib. rub. in Scacc. ap. Wilk. i. p. 394.

sooner than yield the investiture of the prelates. The matter was referred to the Holy See, Henry demanding for himself as a right, enjoyed by his father, the appointment of bishops and abbots by investiture. Investiture, in its least objectionable sense, was the feudal style of putting the bishops and others in possession of their temporalities. When to this was added the actual appointment, it would include the spiritual acts of election and presentation; but the investiture of prelates, in the sense of the German emperors and Norman kings, was more than even this: they conferred this novel investiture by ring and crosier; that is, they thus pretended to confer, not merely the temporalities, but the spiritual power itself. These pretensions, as well as the sale of bishoprics and other enormous crimes, were the deadly fruit of the Hunnish, Danish, and Saracenic wars. There was scarcely a spot upon the continent which had not for more than a century been weeping over its burning fields and its decimated population. Scenes of misery and crime, such as England experienced in the Danish invasions, had overspread Europe. When peace returned, the work of Christianity, especially in its action upon the great, had almost to recommence. Several even of the Popes had allowed themselves to be immersed in the evils of the time. But, as if to console the faithful, a long succession of holy and even heroic Popes succeeded; and whilst they kept themselves "unspeckled from the world," became the true and faithful shepherds of the amazed and all but scattered flock. One of their most arduous conflicts was to beat down simony, and to terminate the scandal of seeing courtiers and soldiers transferred into bishops, and often most wicked bishops, by the new process of investiture. When Henry's letter, claiming investiture as his hereditary right, was sent to Rome, the struggle against such claims was already at its height. It remained to be seen whether the sword and belt of

the English monarch thus thrown into the scale, would make any essential difference. Pope Paschal was now in the chair of St. Peter. He had already made a crowd of princes his enemies, by continuing the contest against investitures which his predecessors had begun. Yet he shrank not. He did his duty, and left the rest to God. He replied to Henry that he wished to obtain what Christ declares to be his own, when he says, "I am the door: he who enters by me shall be saved." He "who ascends by another way is a thief and a robber." If you are a son of the Church, as indeed every Catholic Christian is, permit your mother, the Church, the spouse of Christ, to enjoy its rightful wedlock. For St. Paul testifies, that when bishops are canonically elected, they are elected by God: "Nor does any one assume the honour to himself, but he who is called by God, as Aaron was." The bishops, the spouses and pastors of the Church, are not to be appointed at the nod of the secular authorities, but by the will and arrangement of Christ and his Church. This power then neither you can ask, nor we concede, without peril to our souls."

When this letter arrived, Henry was enjoying the first moments of success and security. Robert, his eldest brother, had demanded the crown, although hereditary right was not then the rule of succession, had crossed the Channel, and had arrayed his forces against Henry on the Hampshire Downs. The persuasions of St. Anselm induced the nobles on both sides to insist upon peace. Returning, therefore, to Normandy in anger against the archbishop, Robert urged his brother to maintain his right to the condemned investitures. This, as the English monarch declared to St. Anselm, he was quite resolved upon: "I will not lose the customs of my ancestors," were his words. That the grounds upon which this contest rested were the same as under Rufus, need excite no surprise: the bishops were as weak as before; and the

king's council was formed of the same barons as that of Rufus.*

The king proposed that another embassy should be despatched to the Pope, to inform him that either he must surrender the investitures, or that St. Anselm would be sent from the kingdom. To this proposal, for the sake of greater certainty, St. Anselm assented. Three bishops, Gerard of York, Herbert of "Thetford" or "Norwich," and Robert of Chester, represented the king, and two monks the archbishop.†

Paschal expressed his surprise at this reiterated demand: "Shall I scatter," he said, "the decrees and institutions of the holy Fathers through the menaces of one man?" "By the judgment of the Holy Ghost," thus he wrote to Henry, "we interdict to kings and princes, in short, to the laity, the investitures of churches." He wrote also to St. Anselm, exhorting him to persevere: We have renewed the decrees of our fathers, forbidding any cleric to "receive churches or ecclesiastical gifts at the hand of a laic. For this is the root of simoniacal wickedness, that foolish men, in order to obtain the dignities of the Church, court the favour of secular persons. On this account did the venerable majesty of holy councils decree that the power of princes was to be repelled from ecclesiastical elections, in order that, as by Christ alone the first gate is opened to the Church in baptism, and the last in death to eternal life, so by Christ alone the door-keeper of the fold of Christ may be appointed, by whom the sheep of Christ may find ingress and egress to eternal life for Christ's sake, and not for the wages of the sheep."‡

When the three bishops had returned to Henry, the king despatched a messenger to St. Anselm, requiring him either to admit "the customs," or to quit the

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. iii. pp. 55—62, Seld.; Sax. Chron.

† Ib. p. 62.

‡ See the letter in Ead. ib. pp. 63 and 64.

kingdom. The archbishop desired to see the Pope's letter to Henry, saying that he was ready to obey the king, "saving his own honour, and saving obedience to the Holy See."

Henry refused to show the letter, and yet required the archbishop to promise unconditional obedience. Wondering that the king should withhold the letter, which, he said, agreed with his words, St. Anselm caused his own letter to be publicly read, and, finally, sent his two messengers to the king. The scene that followed, however humiliating, is, unfortunately, not uncommon in the courts of princes.

The three bishops were not ashamed to declare that the Pope had granted the investitures. They were asked how it was that they had received no charter or instrument to testify to so great a gift. They replied, that the Pope did not wish to establish what might be claimed and acted upon by other princes as a precedent.

The monks urged that the Pope would not have said anything that contradicted what he wrote. The bishops observed that he had done one thing in private, and another in public. Baldwin, one of the two monks, now became indignant, and reproached them for having said what was irreconcilable with an oath which, in his presence, they had taken to the Pope.

This produced a warm debate amongst the barons, some vindicating the monks, others defending the three bishops. Some of the latter maintained the extraordinary assertion, that as the monks had renounced the world, they could not be trustworthy witnesses in the affairs of the world. When the Pope's letter to St. Anselm was appealed to, fully confirming the statement of the latter, the bishops' defenders thought to hide their confusion by shifting the point in dispute, and suddenly exclaimed, "What are sheep-skins, daubed with ink, and loaded with a lump of lead?" "Wo, wo!" cried out some religious; "are not the Gospels written on sheep-skins?" The result was,

that St. Anselm was obliged to send other messengers to Rome.*

A council was held in the interval at Westminster (A.D. 1102). From a mere glance at its acts the fearful state of the Church in England may easily be surmised. The abbots of Pershore, Tavistock, and Ramsay, and the abbots elect of Peterborough, Cernel, and Middelton, were deposed for the crime of simony; and for other causes not specified, the abbots of Edmundsbury, Peterborough, and Miceleney. So great a number was never equalled in one council, even in the worst of times.

Bishops were forbidden to be secular judges, and were commanded to wear the episcopal dress, and to have in their company wherever they were, respectable men as witnesses of their method of life.

No one was to receive the subdeaconship, or any higher grade of orders, without making the profession of chastity.

No cleric was to preside over secular affairs, and all clerics were to wear a dress of one colour, and to have a conspicuous tonsure.

No church was to be consecrated until necessities for the priest and the church were provided.

Archdeaconries were not to be farmed; churches and prebends were not to be bought.

Tithes were to be given to churches only.

The dead were not to be carried out of their own parish.

Men were to have their hair so cut as not to cover the eyes, and so as to allow part of the ears to be seen.

No one henceforth was to presume to exercise that "nefarious traffic by which," said the decree, "it has hitherto been the custom to sell men like brute beasts."

The king, meantime, by the delivery of the pastoral staff, invested Roger, his chancellor, with the bishopric of Salisbury, and another Roger, with that

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. iii. pp. 64 and 65.

of Hereford. Just at this time, the latter Roger dying suddenly, Reinelm, the queen's chancellor, received the investiture. It so happened that St. Anselm was about to consecrate William, the bishop elect of Winchester, who had been canonically elected by the clergy and people. Henry declared that he should not consecrate him without including the two whom he himself had invested; and "commanded Gerard," the archbishop of York, to consecrate all three. Reinelm thereupon sent back to Henry the ring and staff, with expressions of grief for having received them. To punish him for his return to his duty, the king ordered him to quit the court. It may appear surprising that St. Anselm took no active measures to prevent the consecration of men thus about to be thrust upon the Church. Even saints will act differently, according to difference of character and judgment, under the very same circumstances. St. Gregory VII. and St. Thomas would probably have spoken out on such an occasion.

All things, meantime, were prepared for the consecration of the other two. The church was crowded with people anxious to see the issue, and the bishops were vested, and were beginning the ceremony, when William interrupted them, by refusing ordination. The people broke out into loud applause; and with one voice declared that he was "a lover of right, and that the bishops were no bishops, but infringers of justice." Both angry and alarmed, the bishops went and complained to the king. William was immediately called in, and was accused as if guilty of a crime. He was stripped of all his goods and driven from the kingdom. In vain did St. Anselm now interpose; in vain did he demand judgment and justice. Henry and his great council (perhaps glad of an opportunity to gain more time) replied that he must go to Rome with a royal envoy, and there arrange the matter to the honour of the king. Fresh letters from the Holy See had, meantime, been received by St. Anselm; but the king would not so much as listen to them. In

great grief the aged prelate replied, at last, that he would indeed go, but that he would do nothing that could injure the Church or his own conscience* (April, 1103).

Leaving England, therefore, he remained during the heat of summer at his beloved solitude of Bec. Whilst there, he opened letters from the Pope which he had feared to read in England, lest in some way he should communicate with those that were cut off from the Church. He found that the three bishops, for the reproach of double-dealing which they had endeavoured by their unblushing falsehood to cast upon the Holy See, were excommunicated; and that those who had received investiture from laymen or that had ordained such as had received it, were all involved in the same sentence.

Notwithstanding this letter, St. Anselm thought it necessary to prosecute his journey. When he arrived in Rome, William, the agent of Rufus during his former appeal, and now the agent of Henry, had already arrived. When proceedings between them were opened, William spoke of the generosity of English kings to the Romans, endeavouring to show that the Popes, in return, had of old granted customs which it would be unbecoming in Henry to relinquish, and the loss of which the Romans would have reason for ever to deplore. Some of the listeners exclaimed, as he finished, that his petition ought to be granted.

St. Anselm remained silent: he thought that as the pastor of bishops was present, he himself, by speaking, would be guilty of intrusion, as it was no longer his office to open or shut the door of the fold. Paschal himself was silent, ruminating what he had just heard.

Misinterpreting this silence, and encouraged by the partial applause, William triumphantly cried out: "Whatever may be anywhere said, I would have those that take part with my lord the king of the

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. iii. pp. 68—70; Flor. of Worc. A.D. 1103.

English to know, that not for the loss of his kingdom would he suffer the loss of the investitures of the churches." Paschal now opened his lips: "If, as you say, your king will not, for the loss of his kingdom, endure to lose the granting of the churches, know and take notice, before God I say it, Pope Paschal will never, even for saving his own life, allow him with impunity to hold them."

William now stood astonished at his own rashness; while the assembly burst into acclamation at the Pope's decision. Paschal spared Henry, but pronounced excommunication against those that had received or should in future receive investiture at his hand.*

Henry wreaked his disappointment upon the archbishop. He warned him not to return to England unless he was prepared to obey what the king was pleased to call his "customs." St. Anselm, therefore, took up his abode once more in Lyons, and once more heard of the confiscation of his goods, and the sufferings, not only of his own monks and vassals, but of the great mass of the people.

For Henry had not yet succeeded in conquering Normandy; and therefore returned to England, to wring money from his impoverished subjects. Heavy exactions were levied without mercy. Those that had nothing to give were driven from their homes; or, if allowed to remain, it was not until their cabins had been plundered of their little furniture, and the very doors had been torn down and carried off. Of those that had some property, many were accused of some infringement of law, and not daring to defend themselves against their sovereign, were despoiled of everything. Such acts of injustice were by no means uncommon: they began a few years after the battle of Hastings, and ever since had been continually repeated. But now, when the country was exhausted, when people had little left,

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. iii. pp. 64—73.

and that little was taken, the evil became intolerable. "God knows," says the "Saxon Chronicle,"—"God knows how this miserable people is dealt with. If a man possesses anything, it is taken from him; if he has nothing, he is left to perish by famine." In their despair, a body of husbandmen once threw down their ploughs before the king, and bade him take them too, as he had taken the very bread from their mouths. Of the consequence of this bold reproof we are not informed: Henry seems to have continued as reckless and insatiable as ever.

In a council which had been held at London by St. Anselm some time before, penalties had been enacted for the enforcement of celibacy. When unlearned and simoniacal bishops were thrust in by the court, it is no wonder that they, in their turn, ordained equally unlearned and simoniacal priests; and no wonder that many of the clergy who were thus ordained abandoned themselves to the worldly spirit that prevailed, neglecting one duty, and then another, until they trampled on the canons, married, and conformed in every respect to the dress and manners of the laity. Although the king was, in no small degree, the cause of these evils, he determined to make them a source of profit. He infringed the canons to procure money by the sale of bishoprics; and for the same purpose, he pretended now to enforce, while in reality he still violated them, by levying the penalties incurred by the infringers of celibacy.

As, however, "very many" of the clergy were found to have preserved themselves free from the general corruption, the sum that was thus obtained was far from satisfying the king. He determined to include the innocent with the guilty. Every parish church was fined to a certain amount, which was immediately and vigorously exacted.

Many of the clergy were unable to pay; others, indignant at such gross injustice, determined to suffer any extremity rather than submit. There was,

however, no mercy : submission or no submission, the money was exacted, or devastation, imprisonment, and even torture, was the penalty. While the whole country was thus ransacked, Henry happened to go to London. He was met by a procession of two hundred priests in alb and stole, with naked feet and plaintive supplication. The pitiless monarch pretended to regard them as the infringers of celibacy, and ordered them to be driven from his presence with clubs. They hurried to the queen. She burst into tears, but declared that she dared not to interfere. The very bishops, so long the creatures of the king, implored St. Anselm to return, promised to submit to him as to a father, and to do whatever he required. "We have expected peace," they wrote, "and it has gone farther from us : we have sought good, and trouble has increased. The ways of Sion mourn, because the uncircumcised have trodden in them : the temple mourns, because laics have broken in upon the Holy of Holies, and even to the altar. Arise as did of old that aged man of renown, Matathias. You have in your sons, the valour of Judas, the fortitude of Jonathan, the prudence of Simon. These will fight with you the battle of the Lord."

Henry himself now began slowly to relent. He had never entirely ceased to correspond with the forgiving primate ; and he had even, through the good offices of his sister Adela, had a conference with St. Anselm at the castle of Aquila, in Blois. Although the meeting led to no immediate result, a promise then made to send again messengers to Rome, was finally kept, and a reconciliation in consequence effected.

The terms of this peace were, that the churches which Rufus had made a source of royal revenue should be put again into the hands of the primate ; that as long as any of them were vacant, Henry should not take any portion of their revenues ; and that the priests whom Henry had fined, or attempted to fine, under pretence of a breach of celibacy, should

have this reparation, that they who had given nothing as yet, should be free, and that they who had, should enjoy all their property unmolested for three years ; and that all the proceeds of the archiepiscopal see during the saint's exile, should be delivered to him on his return. As the king neither exacted, nor even mentioned, the investiture which he had before insisted upon, and as he afterwards formally renounced it, the archbishop's success was marked and complete. In consequence of a previous letter from Paschal, excommunication was removed from those who had consecrated persons invested, or had themselves been invested, by laymen. The three bishops, however, whose falsehood had created so much scandal, were not to be admitted to absolution until they had visited the Holy See.*

When the archbishop had thus been restored to his see, he found all things in confusion. The king's agents were in possession of churches and monasteries, seizing, wasting, all things. The whole country was, at the same time, a spoil to a brutal foreign soldiery : if the king rode by, his attendants would enter the houses ; and having seized what food there was, they often burned what they were unable to eat, and poured upon the ground, or made use for washing their horses' hoofs, of what they were unable to drink. To add to the general misery, all kinds of business transactions were deranged by the universally corrupt state of the coinage.

St. Anselm and others urged the king to provide a remedy for these evils. The coiners and pillagers of cottages and peasantry, were therefore made liable by royal command, to suffer mutilation ; and many being at once subjected to punishment, the country assumed a more tranquil appearance.

To fill the vacant sees, the archbishop consecrated at once five bishops ; four English and one Welsh.

To check the corruption of manners amongst the

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. iv. pp. 73—90. See also the Ep. ap. Ead. ib. and in Wilk. Conc. i. pp. 378, 379, and 402 ; Flor. of Worc. 1107.

clergy, was his next concern. Pope Paschal had already written to him to say, that as one half of clerics were sons of priests,* they might, if good and learned, be promoted by a departure from the rigour of canon law, to "sacred offices," provided no detriment ensued to ecclesiastical custom.†

With regard to priests themselves, they, as well as deacons and subdeacons and all canons, were forbidden by a council of English bishops, to have any women in their houses, but their very nearest relations, according to the canon of the Council of Nice. Deprivation and excommunication were the successive punishment of any married priest that should presume to say mass.‡

One of the last acts of St. Anselm, was his presence at a great council, at which all, including the bishop of Lincoln, agreed that that bishop's diocese was too large, and that it would be advisable to erect a new episcopal chair in the abbey of Ely. When St. Anselm had written to the Holy See for its sanction, and was awaiting its reply, and whilst, at the same time, he was endeavouring to persuade Thomas, the archbishop elect of York, to make to him the usual profession of obedience, he arrived at the termination of all his labours. Despite of infirmity, he caused himself to be carried to mass until within five days of his death (April 21st, 1109). At the dawn of Palm Sunday, 1109, when his monks were sitting around him, one of them said: "My lord and father, you are going to leave the world, and to keep Easter in the halls of your Lord." The archbishop, in reply, expressed his readiness to depart; but said that he should be thankful if he could first solve a question upon the origin of mind, which he feared would not be explained after his death. On the following Tuesday evening, the Passion of our Lord, which was

* "Ut major pene et melior clericorum pars," &c.—Wilk. i. 138.

† Comp. Ep. ap. Ead. l. iv. p. 91, with the same ap. Wilk. i. p. 378.

‡ Ead. Hist. Nov. pp. 94 and 95.

that day sung in the mass, was read to him. When his attendants came to the passage, "You are those that have continued with me in my temptations; and I dispose to you, as my Father hath disposed to me, a kingdom," they perceived that his breath was failing. They immediately placed him upon a bed of ashes; and there he lovingly breathed forth his soul into the hand of "Him that gave it."*

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. iv. pp. 95—106; and Vita, ad fin. It has been supposed that the Feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin was instituted by St. Anselm. The Maurist Benedictines, who edited the saint's Works, thought that the supposition was based on a treatise on the Conception, attributed to St. Anselm. Having shown that this work could not have been his, the learned editors thought they had swept away the supposition itself. It rested, however, upon other foundations (see Opera Sti. An. and Mab. Act. S. Ben. tom. ult. 77—71). It was stated as one of the undisputed traditions of the see of Canterbury, when Robert of Winchelsea, in 1313, renewed St. Anselm's injunction to keep the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary as a festival.—(Harpsf.) The Cott. MS. Vitellius, E, xviii., mentions the Conception amongst the Church festivals. If this were really written, as it is described to have been, in the beginning of the eleventh century, then St. Anselm could have done nothing more than confirm what already existed.

CHAPTER XXXII.

LONG VACANCY OF THE SEE OF CANTERBURY—THE POPE'S REMONSTRANCES AGAINST THIS EVIL AND AGAINST THE INTERRUPTION OF CORRESPONDENCE WITH ROME—THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY CLAIMS, AS HIS RIGHT, THE OFFICE OF LEGATE—TURSTIN, THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, CLAIMS EXEMPTION FROM THE JURISDICTION OF THE SEE OF CANTERBURY—HENRY ASSUMES THE CHARACTER OF ARBITER—HIS NEW CONTEST WITH THE POPE—HIS TWO SONS ARE DROWNED AT SEA—THREAT OF AN INTERDICT—HENRY YIELDS—RENEWAL OF THE QUESTION BETWEEN YORK AND CANTERBURY—JOHN OF CREMA HOLDS THE COUNCIL OF WESTMINSTER—ITS DECREES—DECISION AT ROME CONCEDING TO YORK METROPOLITAN PRIVILEGES.

WHEN it became known that the holy archbishop had gone to his rest, all that had been checked by the canons of the late synods began openly to exult in their expected impunity. Disorders of every kind reappeared: the effeminate fashion of wearing the hair, the open profligacy, the marriages and mock divorces to lead to new and equally mock marriages on the part of not a few of the clergy, all proceeded now with open shamelessness. These mock divorces were made (with shame be it said), even by some archdeacons and bishops, a source of accursed profit.*

There was, for five years together, no successor to the see of Canterbury, and therefore no effectual curb upon the evil-disposed. Urged at last by the Pope's letters to see that an archbishop was appointed, Henry invited the monks of Canterbury and the bishops to repair to his palace of Windsor. They obeyed, and Radulf or Ralph of Rochester was elected (April 26th, A.D. 1114).†

Finding that Radulf had been actually transferred

* Ead. l. iv. pp. 105 and 106.

† Ib. pp. 109 and 110.

from the one see to the other, by the royal authority alone, Paschal hesitated some time before he confirmed the election, or granted the pallium. When he at last consented, he despatched as his legate, Anselm, the nephew of the late archbishop, with the following letter to Henry :—

“Bishop Paschal, the servant of God’s servants, to his beloved son Henry, the illustrious king of the English, health and apostolical benediction. Since you have received in profusion from the hand of the Lord, honour, riches, and peace, we wonder exceedingly and are grieved, that in your kingdom and power, blessed Peter, and in Peter the Lord, has lost his honour and justice. For the messengers or letters of the Apostolic See, without the orders of the royal majesty, obtain in your kingdom no delivery or admission. Nor from thence does any cry, any judgment, come to the Apostolic See. Wherefore many illicit ordinations are presumptuously given amongst you; and they sin licentiously who ought to restrain the licentiousness of sin. In all these matters, however, we have hitherto practised more than usual patience, hoping that all things would be corrected by the industry of your goodness. For what honour, what wealth, what dignity is taken from you, when the reverence due to blessed Peter is preserved in your kingdom? These things, indeed, are so much the more contrary to what we had a right to expect, by how much the more intimately we know your kingdom adhered to the Apostolic See in the times of its ancient kings. Since we read that kings themselves visited the threshold of the Apostles, and there dwelt till their death. We read that the Roman Pontiffs, of their own accord, sent there some rulers and masters of churches. For managing, therefore, and correcting these things amongst you, we despatch to your excellency our very dear son Anselm, your friend, the abbot of St. Saba. By him, we have granted the petition of yourself and the bishops, with regard to the bishop of Canterbury, although against

the authority of the Apostolic See, hoping that even you, henceforth, in the justice of your dignity, will make satisfaction to the Apostolic See. Otherwise, if you withdraw your justice from blessed Peter, he too will afterwards withdraw from you the benefits of your dignity. The legates, by word of mouth, will supply what is not committed to writing. May Almighty God protect you with His right hand, and perfect you with His love. The alms of blessed Peter (as we have heard) have been so badly and deceitfully collected, that as yet the Roman Church has not received one half of it. All this, as well as the rest, is imputed to you, because nothing is attempted in your kingdom without your will. We wish, therefore, that henceforth you cause it to be more fully collected, and that you send it by the present nuntio. Given at the Lateran Palace, March 29th."

This remonstrance, like so many previous ones, produced little or no effect.* The pallium being delivered, and being received by Radulf with naked feet, as before by St. Anselm, all other ecclesiastical business, notwithstanding the legate's presence, seemed suspended. A spiritual paralysis had stricken the Church in England.

When another winter had come and gone, Paschal wrote another and stronger letter to Henry. "When the head of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ, intrusted the Church to its first pastor, the Apostle Peter, he said: 'Feed my sheep, feed my lambs;' the sheep in the Church being the bishops of churches. How, therefore, can we feed either sheep or lambs, whom we know not and have not seen, whom we hear not and by whom we are not heard? How, in their regard, shall we fulfil the Lord's command—'Confirm thy brethren.' Yet you, without consulting us, define the business of bishops, notwithstanding the declarations of the martyrs and Popes, Victor and Zephyrinus. In opposition to the councils and decrees

* Compare the letter and another five weeks earlier to the monks of Canterbury (ap. Ead. l. v. pp. 112—114).

of the holy Fathers, you take from the oppressed their appeal to the Apostolic See. Against your conscience, you have held synodal councils, notwithstanding the declaration of Anastasius of Alexandria: 'At Nice, in the great synod of three hundred and eighteen bishops, we know that it was unanimously confirmed by all, that councils ought not to be celebrated without the knowledge of the Roman Pontiff.' This holy Pontiffs confirmed by their writings, and decreed that councils celebrated in any other way were null and void. You see, therefore, that you have, on the one hand, greatly transgressed against the authority of the Apostolic See, and have very much derogated from its authority; and that, on the other hand, it is incumbent upon us by the duty of our office to confer the sacerdotal dignity upon tried men, lest, in opposition to the Apostle, placing our hand too hastily upon any one, we become partakers in others' sins. Against our authority, you have taken upon yourself the translation of bishops, an act which we know is in every way prohibited without the authority and permission of the most holy Roman See. If, therefore, in all these things you agree to preserve the dignity and reverence due to the Apostolic See, we will preserve towards you the charity which is due to brothers and sons, and with the kind and sweet permission of the Lord, we concede what the Apostolic Church ought to concede. But if you determine still to remain in your obstinacy, we, according to the evangelical precept and apostolic example, will shake off the dust of our feet against you; and we will deliver you, as resisting the Catholic Church, to the Divine judgment, according to our Lord's saying: 'He who gathereth not with me, scattereth; and he who is not with me, is against me.'"*

Whilst the discussion of these important questions still continued, another legate arrived in Normandy, on his way to England. Unfortunately for the peace

* See the Ep. ap. Ead. l. v. p. 115.

of the Church, what the king called his "customs," now coincided in part with what the archbishop of Canterbury claimed as his privilege: the king said that the legate had no right to enter England without his permission; and the archbishop said that his predecessors had always exercised the legatine authority. Their united opposition prevailed, and the application of a remedy to the alarming maladies of the Church in England was again deferred.*

In proportion as new occurrences arose, the king's determination to interfere in all ecclesiastical matters became more and more apparent. Turstin, one of the royal chaplains, being chosen archbishop of York, revived the claim of exemption from the jurisdiction of Canterbury, and refused the oath of obedience (A.D. 1114). Quoting St. Bede as his authority, he maintained that from the time of St. Augustine to that of Theodore none of the archbishops had enjoyed the Primacy of all England. If even Theodore was an exception, it was owing solely to his acknowledged pre-eminence in ecclesiastical learning.

In this question, Henry, ever too ready to interfere in ecclesiastical matters, took upon himself to be the arbiter. The assembling of a great council of the barons, at Scarborough, gave him the desired opportunity (A.D. 1116): his decision was, that unless Turstin abandoned his claim, he must abandon his bishopric. Turstin is said to have replied, that he was perfectly willing to pledge himself both to Henry and to Radulf of Canterbury, that he would never again advance his claim. The clergy of York, who had elected Turstin, would not, however, consent to this surrender; but despatched the more prudent of their number to the Holy See. Having given audience to the deputies, Paschal again cautioned Henry to honour God and His Church, and required him to suffer Turstin, "a wise and energetic man," to return to the church from which, without judgment or justice, he had been

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. v. p. 118.

sequestrated. He added, that if any question remained between the two churches of York and Canterbury, it should be brought before him for decision.

For three years more, however, the question remained in the same state. Paschal II. died in 1118, after a most arduous and glorious pontificate. In 1119, Pope Callixtus was holding a numerous council at Rheims. Turstin obtained, after much entreaty, the king's permission to attend.* The royal messengers, however, were there before him, bidding the Pope not to consecrate, nor to allow any other but the archbishop of Canterbury to consecrate, the archbishop elect of York. They even declared, in their master's name, that if his wishes were not attended to, he would not, for the loss of his crown, or for seven years' excommunication, admit Turstin again into his kingdom. The king, perhaps, thought to win his point the more easily, because Callixtus was still engaged with Henry, the emperor, in the contest of investitures; and because the emperor was at no great distance, watching the proceedings of the council. The Pope, however, betrayed no emotion at this presumptuous message: he merely replied; "Let not the king suppose that in the point in question, I shall do what is against reason; for it is not my intention to humble the just dignity of the church of Canterbury." On the other hand, he knew the evil of leaving a church without its pastor; and he knew also how frequently the Anglo-Norman kings had been the sole cause of this and other evils; and therefore he consecrated Turstin himself.

As Henry in his vexation forbade the latter to enter his dominions, Callixtus, in a personal conference, requested, as a mark of regard to himself, the admission of Turstin to his see. Henry alleged that he had

* He first took an oath not to receive from the Pope episcopal consecration; such, at least, is Eadmer's statement. Eadmer, however, was laid up at Canterbury with the infirmities of age (see p. 123), and in points of dispute between York and Canterbury too evidently stands forth as a partisan.

sworn never to admit him. The Pope offered to absolve him from so rash an oath; but the king now said that he would consult about it. They parted; and Henry wrote to Callixtus, declaring plainly, that he would not receive him, unless he took the disputed oath of subjection (A.D. 1119).*

The continental bishops watched the progress of this contest with great interest. To them it appeared evident that Turstin was right, "they being ignorant of the customs and privileges of Christ Church, Canterbury," says the over-zealous Eadmer. His own representation of their views ought to have modified his censure; if they were ignorant of such privileges, they were certainly not unwilling to be enlightened; and they pointed out even to the monks of Canterbury the true method by which to obtain a reasonable decision: they appealed to the existing monuments of both churches. It became necessary for both parties, therefore, to search into their records, as Turstin had already done. In the following year, Turstin displayed such ability in negotiating a peace between Henry and Louis of France, that the former began to waver. Just then, when he was on the point of embarking for England, he received a letter from the Pope, commanding him to put aside all excuse, and admit Turstin to his church. The king still, according to his usual policy, deferred the question; he would consider it on some early opportunity, when he had reached England. He therefore sailed from Barfleur, full of exultation; for he had succeeded in winning an advantageous peace, and in quieting Normandy; and he had seen the barons of that duchy pay cheerful homage to William, his son and heir. But (who shall weigh the judgments of God?) he never saw that son and heir

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. v. pp. 117, 118, 120, &c. Selden; Sim. Dun. De Gest. Reg. an. 1114—1119; Ann. War. an. 1119—1120. The writer of the latter Annals displays haste and warmth in his brief account, and would cut short a question that perplexed men of wider views and calmer judgments: Turstin, he states, received consecration at the hands of the Pope, against right, "against the will of the archbishop of Canterbury, against the wish of King Henry," &c.

again. William, with Richard, another son, and many nobles, knights, and ladies, were lost on their passage to England, the ship having struck upon a rock in a calm sea (November, 1120). Some months wore away; but the king, occupied with a new marriage, appeared to have forgotten Turstin. Letters from Rome, therefore, came to him, and to Radulf of Canterbury, suspending the latter, and putting the kingdom under an interdict, unless, within a month, Turstin were recalled. There was to be no service for the dead, no kind of divine office, no administration of the sacraments, except baptism to infants, and penance to the dying. Henry, humbled as he had been by the loss of his son, found it time to yield; and Turstin at last took possession of his see (A.D. 1121). He afterwards received a papal bull, confirming to his see its metropolitan privileges.*

The see of Canterbury being now vacant by the death of Radulf, William, the archbishop elect, was on the point of being consecrated by Turstin, according to custom, when he exclaimed, "If you will ordain me primate of all England, I will readily incline to your hands; but, otherwise, I will not be so imprudent as to be ordained in a manner contrary to ancient custom." To this Turstin would by no means consent; and the consecration was deferred. At Henry's desire, the suffragans of Canterbury cut short the question, by consecrating William themselves.†

While Turstin was engaged in controversy regarding the primacy, he had to defend the rights of his own see against the Scottish bishops, who declared that they were not under his jurisdiction. Alexander, the king of Scotland, imitated the sovereigns of England and Germany, by espousing the cause of the bishop of St. Andrew's as his own, and by seizing his opportunities to set up his "customs" as a ground for interfering in

* Ead. Hist. Nov. l. v. and vi. pp. 135 and 136; Sim. De Gest. Reg. 1120, 1121; Wilk. Conc. i. A.D. 1126.

† Sim. Dun. De Gest. Reg. an. 1123.

the government of the church, and for investing by delivery of ring and crosier.*

That these various claims might be thoroughly scrutinized, and that there might be a searching visitation both of sees and abbeys, the Pope despatched John of Crema,† as legate of all Britain.‡ After having been for some time detained by the king in Normandy, John received permission to go to England. After meeting the king of Scotland on the Tweed, he held a council at Westminster. Twenty bishops, the two archbishops, and about forty abbots were present.

It was forbidden to "exact any money at all, for chrism, for oil, for baptism, for penance, for visiting or anointing the sick, for the communion of the body of Christ, for burials;" or to exact money or anything

* Ead. l. v. and vi. pp. 138—141.

† John of Crema's name has been blackened by Henry of Huntingdon; but, undoubtedly, on no solid ground. Those that give all the details of his visit—Simeon of Durham, the Continuator of Florence of Worcester, and Gervase, whose hostility to John, as Lingard justly remarks, is everywhere conspicuous—all are silent regarding the fact mentioned by Henry of Huntingdon. The character of this last-mentioned writer is not such as to give any weight to his unsupported statements. In short, even by the censorious Gervase, John is called a "good cleric."—See Duffus Harding's account of Hunt. in Monum. p. 90.

‡ It is almost amusing to hear Gervase a monk of Canterbury's lamentations, and to see his somewhat jaundiced glance into motives, when the privileges of his church are in question. John of Crema, being cardinal-legate, sat on a higher place than the archbishop of Canterbury, and therefore, of course, higher than all the other dignitaries, whether bishops or barons.—(G. Act. Pon. Can. ap. Dec. Script. p. 1663.) This fired Gervase's narrow-minded zeal. He cannot bear to see any other legate but the archbishop of Canterbury; and ventures, rashly enough (because, indeed, contrary to fact), to assert, like Eadmer (Hist. Nov.), that the archbishop had never, from the time of St. Augustine, seen a legate above himself. This was the reason, according to Gervase, why the archbishop went to Rome; but certainly it was not the only, nor the weightiest reason. He went to appeal against Turstin as much as against the legate. Gervase also forgets to view, in the legate's person, the Pope, whom he represented; and talks indignantly of one who was only a priest, "although, nevertheless, a good cleric," thus commanding bishops and all England. It is Gervase's characteristic to allow his feelings to overpower his judgment. He is very trustworthy in his facts; but, beyond the bare fact, is seldom a trustworthy guide.

else at the consecration of bishops, or the blessing of abbots ; or for any one to receive a church, or tythe, or benefice, from the gift or hand of a layman, without the consent of his own bishop. All that held churches or benefices, and yet, with the intention of living with less restraint, refused to be ordained when invited by the bishop, were to forfeit their churches or benefices. No bishop was to presume to cast out any one ordained by another, without that other's sanction. Subdeacons and clergy of higher grade, if living in pretended wedlock, were to be deposed. The same punishment was to fall upon all the clergy that were guilty of "usury and filthy gain."

When the council broke up, the archbishops of Canterbury and York, the bishops of Lincoln and Glasgow, and the abbots of St. Alban's and Sherborne, took their departure for Rome, accompanying the legate, it appears, on his return. Turstin was there on several points defeated, but obtained a confirmation of his privileges as metropolitan. William of Canterbury, on the other hand, was appointed legate of the Holy See for England and Scotland.*

* Bull. ap. Wilk. i. p. 409 ; Ib. an. 1126 ; Sim. De Gest. Reg. an. 1123—1127 ; Ann. Wav. 1125 ; Gervas. p. 1664 ; Contin. Flor. of Worc. A.D. 1127. The Scottish bishops were made independent of the see of York in the latter part of the fifteenth century, when incessant wars, raging chiefly upon the borders, made recourse to York exceedingly precarious. St. Andrew's and Glasgow were then raised by the Holy See to the dignity of archbishoprics.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ACCESSION OF STEPHEN—DISORGANIZATION OF SOCIETY—UNUSUAL ARREST OF ROGER OF SALISBURY—ARRIVAL OF MATILDA—CIVIL WAR—FEARFUL INROAD OF THE SCOTCH—HEXHAM SANCTUARY—BATTLE OF THE STANDARD—ARRIVAL OF ALBERIC, THE LEGATE—SYNODS AT CARLISLE AND LONDON—LAST MOMENTS OF ARCH-BISHOP TURSTIN.

ON the death of Henry, his nephew Stephen claimed and received the crown (December, 1135). It soon became evident, however, that it could be secured only by a hazardous civil war. The nobles had pledged themselves to support the cause of the Empress Matilda, the daughter of Henry; but, as she had been given in marriage without their sanction, they became at once divided, not a few of them regarding their compact as broken by Henry himself. Whilst, therefore, some elected Stephen, others were anxiously awaiting Matilda's arrival; and a third party, caring little for the rights of either, remained spectators of the gathering storm, or else were laying their plans to carry on their own private feuds, or to live as freebooters on the spoils of their weaker neighbours.

Sounds of ominous preparation rang, therefore, through the whole country. Fortifications were strengthened; arms, provisions, and vassals were collected; and mercenaries crowded the halls and courtyards of many a castle. Several deeds of violence followed, provoking to other deeds still more outrageous. The confusion thus arising was increased by some desperate inroads of the Welsh, and by the ferocious spirit of the royal mercenaries. The latter, especially the light-armed troops, composed chiefly of Welsh and Flemings, were tyrannizing at will in all directions. The royal banner became a sign of terror.

People knew not whom to trust. Every man's hand seemed against his neighbour. Woe to those citizens or monks, or others, whom necessity compelled to travel: when riding peaceably on the king's highway, they rarely escaped being surrounded by armed men, dragged from their saddles, and hurried to a dungeon. Ordinary pillage was not enough; even cemeteries and churches were plundered. Nor were the royal domains themselves secure. Too lavish of his promises, Stephen often provoked when he had endeavoured to conciliate. Some of his nobles, finding that he had thus broken his word, sought compensation in the ravage of his estates. The king, of course, repaid them with a similar hostile visit.*

In the midst of these deeds of violence, and with open civil war looming in the distance, it was scarcely surprising that Roger, the bishop of Salisbury, added to his defences. As a great landowner, he had crops and vassals to guard; and therefore seems to have scarcely, if at all, outstripped his duty.

The king, however, was both dissatisfied and suspicious: and when a quarrel had arisen between the men of the bishop and of his two nephews, the bishops of Lincoln and Ely on one side, and those of Alan of Bretagne, earl of Richmond, on the other, Stephen called upon the bishop to make satisfaction by surrendering the keys of his castles. He also required one of Roger's nephews to yield to him the castle of Newark, which he had just erected. The bishops promised satisfaction, but refused the keys. They were therefore cast into prison, and were only released upon their unconditional obedience.†

Opinions were greatly divided with regard to this unusual kind of arrest. Some thought that the bishops had transgressed the canons, by building such fortresses. Others said that even if they had, the

* Will. of Malm. Hist. Nov. l. i. sects. 14—18; Contin. Chron. Flor. Wigorn. A.D. 1136—1138.

† Will. of Malm. Hist. Nov. l. ii. sect. 1, &c.; Ioan Hagulstad. an. 1136—1139.

castles could not be seized, without the sanction both of the great council of nobles, and of an ecclesiastical synod.*

Henry, the bishop of Winchester, who was the brother of Stephen, and legate of the Holy See, strove to induce the king to yield back the castles. Finding his efforts unavailing, he called a synod, and summoned Stephen to attend. The latter sent Alberic de Vere to appear in his name. He himself remained in the neighbourhood. Roger of Salisbury, too, was there demanding justice; and declaring, that if he could not find it in the synod, he would seek it in a higher tribunal. The bishop of Winchester so far concurred with him, as to declare, that a synodal inquiry ought to have been made, and that Roger ought again to be put in possession of his property, and then to be fairly tried.

The result of all was, that Stephen, hearing that the bishops were preparing to send to the Holy See, sent to them a twofold and somewhat contradictory message. He cautioned them, that "if any of them went anywhere from England against his will and the dignity of the kingdom, he would perhaps find his return difficult." He added at the same time, that being aggrieved, he "of his own accord summoned them to meet his appeal to Rome."†

As the bishops did not wish to excommunicate the king without the Pope's knowledge, and as the excitement on the part of Alberic's attendants was so great that their swords were already drawn, the synod was brought to a close.

The legate and the archbishop then proceeded to the king's apartments, and throwing themselves at his feet, entreated him "to take pity on the Church and on his own soul and reputation." Stephen graciously rose to receive them, and, as usual, made lavish

* "Non esse regis, sed canonum judicium; sine publico et ecclesiastico concilio illos nulla possessione privati debuisse."—Will. of Malm. Hist. Nov. l. ii. sect. 21.

† "Ultrò ad Romam appellat vos."—Ib. sect. 27.

promises; and afterwards, as was equally usual with him, renounced his promises, on the first whisper of their enemies.*

Scarcely another month had elapsed, when the civil war which had been for many weeks foreboded, suddenly burst forth. Matilda, the empress, landed in Sussex with her half-brother, Robert of Gloucester, and a body of about 140 knights. The sound of arms and the gathering of warriors were immediately redoubled. Castle-walls were crumbling under the strokes of the battering-ram; towns were in flames; and a hundred fields were red with blood. Before the troops of king and empress were thus marching and fighting, and the mass of the barons were lording it at will over the people, the Scottish king had led across the borders, a motley host of Scots and Picts, and with them even some bands of Normans and English. His men, like their southern neighbours, had relapsed during their struggles with the Danes, into the grossest ignorance and depravity. The efforts of their good queen, St. Margaret, had produced a striking change; but now that she had gone to her reward, it was evident that many of the troops were still almost as brutal as the Danes themselves. When, therefore, they found themselves among the farms and towns of Northumberland and the adjoining counties, they spared nothing; they restrained themselves in nothing. The farm-house, the peasant's cabin, the tower of defence, and the parish church, all alike were rifled and burnt. The men and old women were butchered. The very children could extort no pity. Most of the women that escaped the slaughter were bound with thongs, and driven to Scotland at the point of the lance, like herds of cattle.

One spot alone remained unscathed—the church of Hexham, which St. Wilfrid had consecrated in honour of St. Andrew the Apostle. Popes and bishops, and kings and nobles, had unanimously given and confirmed to this church, from the days of St. Wilfrid,

* Will. of Malm. Hist. Nov. l. ii. sect. 19—28.

the rights of sanctuary and inviolable peace. At the distance of a mile on each of the four sides of the church, stood the boundary cross that marked the limits of the privilege. Within these limits no Christian invader dared to plant his foot: he dreaded, even more than the heavy fine that would follow, the sentence of excommunication and the anger of the saintly patrons of the church. It seemed, however, as if this right were now to be violated. A Scottish chieftain was one day observed leading his men to the Tyne, and seeking to cross, with every appearance of a hostile motive. The youth of Hexham could not brook the sight. They sallied out, encountered the enemy, and slew their leader.

The Scottish army in its fury threatened to tear Hexham, house and church alike, from its very foundations; and at once a strong party dashed forward to accomplish the threat. One of the principal nobles, however, forced them to return; and David planted a trusty band to watch and guard the threatened boundaries. The king, moreover, gave all the prisoners that fell to his own share to the prior of Hexham, as "a pledge of liberty." Stern as he often found it necessary to be, this king was, like his mother St. Margaret, both a lover of the poor, whom he often fed and clothed, and whose feet he often washed, and also a daily frequenter of the offices of holy Church, never omitting the various canonical hours, or even the vigils of the dead.* Whether stimulated by his example, or moved by Christian charity and justice, a considerable number of his followers, on reaching Carlisle, released their captives, and delivered them to the Church of St. Mary's.†

Continuing its uninterrupted course, the Scottish army boasted that it would seize half England, and

* John of Hexham, 1154; Ailred Riev. De Geneal. Reg. &c. pp. 348 and 367, apud Decem Script.

† Richard of Hexham, De Statu et Ep. Hagust. Eccl. l. i. c. 5; and l. ii. c. 13 and 14; ib. De Gest. Steph. compared with John of Hexham, Simeon's continuator.

pouring its numerous bands over the whole face of Durham and Northern Yorkshire, it still gluttled its appetite for blood and pillage.

Turstin, the archbishop, was, all this while, grieving bitterly over the calamities of his spiritual children. Two years before this, oppressed as he was by the infirmities of age, he had crossed the Tweed, and obtained a truce from the Scottish king. Now, however, other means were necessary. Yet, what could be done? The Scots were inexorable; and the English at their first appearance in the field, had been repeatedly trampled under-foot.

Turstin still hoped; he determined to die if necessary in the defence of his flock. Having assembled the barons of Yorkshire, and some few from Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and a reinforcement from the king, he animated them to give battle for "holy Church and their country." To add to their numbers, he commanded each parish priest to lead his parishioners, with cross and banner, and the relics of the saints, against the common enemy. When all had assembled, and had spent a triduum, or three days, in alms-deeds, fasting, and prayer, they received his blessing, and full of ardour, quitted York, their gathering-place, and marched northwards in quest of the ravagers. They had compelled the aged archbishop to remain in the city. Near Northallerton they heard of the approach of the Scots. They immediately erected upon a timber platform, the mast of a ship, from the top of which, amidst the banners of SS. Peter, Wilfrid, and John of Beverley, they suspended a pix, containing the blessed sacrament. Around this standard, from which the battle that followed took its name, the English formed in array. When their ranks had closed, Walter d'Espec, an aged but gigantic and well-tried leader, mounted the platform, and addressed the soldiers. He perceived, he said, that some of them were troubled at the enormous disparity of numbers. Victory, however, was gained not by numbers, but either by valour, or

by just prayers and an honourable cause. How often had they despaired of success in France, and yet prevailed. Were they now to fear the Scots, men armed with leather, whose shields were skins, and who had themselves so lately yielded to English bravery. Gaze not upon the length of their spears: their handles are brittle, their heads pointless. They are rendered unserviceable by the first blow. A stick may receive the shock, and the Scot is disarmed. The greater their number, the more glorious will be the victory. We cannot distrust our cause: necessity has impelled us to war. Remember what they have done beyond the Tyne. They have tossed infants into the air, and caught them upon their spears: they have spared neither age nor sex. I shudder to relate "the manner in which they have trampled under-foot the mysteries of Christian salvation. You are engaged in war not with men, but with wild beasts, in whom there is neither humanity nor godliness. Happy the hands which Christ has chosen, to avenge this day His own injuries. Michael, with his angels, will fight to avenge his injuries, since they have polluted his church with blood. St. Peter, with the Apostles, will fight to avenge their injuries, since they have turned their basilicas either into stables or into dens of prostitution. More than this, Christ himself will take arms and a buckler, and will rise unto our help. For the Scots are coming against us in pride: we are meeting them in humility. They are surfeited with the stolen flesh which they have devoured: we, after holy fasts, have been richly fed with the flesh and blood of Christ. Before them go players, and male and female dancers; before us, the cross of Christ and the relics of the saints. But why do I delay? It is plain we must conquer or die. For who would wish to survive a victory gained by the Scots, and see his wife subjected to their insults, and his children transfixed with their lances." Then, turning to the earl of Albemarle, and seizing his right hand, the grey-headed speaker cried out: "I plight thee my faith, I will

either conquer the Scots or be slain by the Scots." Every chieftain around him repeated his words; and to show that they were in earnest, they sent their horses to the rear, cutting off all hopes of flight.

Whilst the English were thus preparing for battle, the Scottish chiefs and their king were equally busy. It was thought advisable, that the archers and well-armed knights should take the lead. The men of Galloway, however, claimed, in opposition to the Normans, the post of honour as their right. "Why, O king," they cried out, "do you overmuch fear the iron tunics yonder? Assuredly our sides are iron; our bosoms brass. Our minds are without fear. Our feet never knew flight, nor our backs a wound. But lately on the field of Clitheroe, we conquered the mail-clad Normans, and to-day, with our valour for our shields, we will prostrate yonder foemen with our lances." "Why should we trust so much to these Frenchmen?" exclaimed, amongst others, the earl of Strathorne: "I wear no armour, but there is not one of them all who will keep pace with me to-day." Alan de Percy replied that he had uttered a big word, which he could not keep for his life. Fearing some feud, David yielded to the earl's demand.

Scarcely had he hushed the contention, when De Bruce arrived from the English army, to treat of peace. Not succeeding, he renounced the allegiance which he owed for certain lands in Scotland, and immediately withdrew to the Standard.

When he had told the issue of his attempt, and when the increasing sound of warlike music, and the clash of arms and tramp of men announced that the enemy was prepared, and even advancing, the bishop of the Orkneys, who had been deputed by Turstin, briefly addressed the troops; and gave them the usual absolution and the episcopal blessing. They received it striking their breasts, raising their hands to heaven, and crying aloud: "Amen, amen."

Another and a very different cry immediately arose: it was the terrific and thrice-repeated howl of the

savages of Galloway, as they dashed upon the serried mass of the English. It seemed almost as if they had succeeded; for all the foremost line yielded for a moment to the shock. But again it is firm, and more compact than before. And now from the inner parts of that serried mass, comes forth a hail thicker and thicker upon the raging assailants; a hail of arrows, each one to its mark. Baffled, but scorning to avow it, the Scotch redouble the fury of their onset. It is in vain. Worn out by their own rage, they begin, at last, to slacken their efforts. Their eyes are bewildered with the intermittent but rapid flight of arrows; and their flashing weapons deal but idle blows. Two of their leaders have now fallen; and, stunned and overwhelmed by the iron tempest, the men in the rear begin to fall off, and skulk away; and the panic spreading, the whole body was breaking up, and was already in flight, when Prince Henry, one of David's sons, attempted to retrieve the day. He swept around the English circle, and had scattered those that kept the horses in the rear, when, looking about him, he found himself almost alone, and amidst the now unfolding ranks of the English. The day was evidently lost: the Scotch were in disorderly retreat; and the English, deploying from around the Standard, were pressing forward, and cutting down the flying enemy. The Scottish prince, therefore, threw away the ensigns of his rank, and riding through the pursuers as if he were one of themselves, contrived to mingle with his countrymen, and thus, at last, to effect his escape. Deep and fervent were the prayers of the English, as, desisting for want of cavalry from further pursuit, they now gathered round the hoary-headed Walter d'Espec, and blessed God for their victory and deliverance.* The Scots, meantime, finding that they were no longer pursued, soon took heart enough to resume their ravages, not indeed in Yorkshire, but in those parts of the three

* Compare John of Hexham, Richard of Hexham, and Ailred of Riev.'s Bell. Stand.

northern counties that had been as yet unscathed, Hexham itself being now involved in the common misfortune.

In this state of things, when nearly all Northumberland was one uncultivated desert, a legate from the Holy See arrived at the Scottish court at Carlisle, as a messenger of peace. It was Alberic, a learned and holy man, who had been taken from his cell at Clugny to fill the see of Ostia. The legate enacted various useful statutes for the Church of Scotland, and induced the king to grant a short truce, and to make restitution for the pillage of Hexham Church. He also persuaded the Scots and Picts, not only to bring to Carlisle and set at liberty all the surviving women whom they had enslaved, but also to promise that they would neither violate any church, nor put any woman, child, or old man, or any other unresisting person to the sword.

Returning southwards, performing a visitation of the churches and monasteries on his way, he held a provincial council in London. Eighteen bishops and about thirty abbots were present. Statutes, similar to those of Westminster under John of Crema, were passed against simony and other sins, as well as to enforce the payment of tithes, and to forbid both the clergy to bear arms, and nuns to use sables, ermines, and other extravagant materials of dress.

The proceedings closed with the election of Theobald to the vacant see of Canterbury. He was consecrated by Alberic. Although such a consecration was, in ordinary circumstances, the privilege of the archbishops of York, neither Turstin, nor his deputy, William, the dean of St. Peter's, made the least opposition. Well did they know that the Pope is the fountain-head of jurisdiction, and where the Pope or his legate was, the ordinary jurisdiction may easily be waived. Turstin's increasing infirmities had prevented his attending the synod. His labours were now drawing to a close. He had reformed ecclesiastical discipline, filled the various church-dignities with learned and

exemplary men ; had been liberal to the poor, and kind, yet firm, towards all ; and had subdued his own body by spare diet, and by hair-shirts and disciplines (A.D. 1139).

Finding his strength almost exhausted, he paid his debts, and, pondering over his past occupations, made restitution for every loss which he had occasioned. Having set his house in order, he summoned his cathedral clergy to his own chapel, and there, before the altar of St. Andrew, he confessed his sins publicly before them ; and, with many tears, made them inflict stripes upon his bare shoulders. Then, mindful of a vow which he had made in his youth at Clugny, he repaired, accompanied by his principal clergy, to the Cluniac* Monastery at Pontefract, and was solemnly professed. He did not long survive. On 6th of February, he celebrated the office of the dead, reciting himself the ninth lesson, and saying slowly, with many sobs, the verse of the response, " Dies iræ, dies illa." The lauds being finished, he breathed forth his soul in peace amidst the prayers of the assembled community.†

* Cluniac, of the Benedictine rule, as practised at Clugny, in the south of France.—See *suprà*, p. 246, note.

† John Hagustald., Simeon of Durham's continuator, compared with Rich. Hagustald., Ailred of Rievaulx, and Chron. Gerv. and Continuation of Florence of Worcester.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE BATTLE OF LINCOLN—STEPHEN TAKEN PRISONER—MEETING ON THE WINCHESTER DOWNS—FLIGHT OF MATILDA FROM LONDON—STRUGGLE AT WINCHESTER—GLOUCESTER TAKEN PRISONER—HIS CONFIDENCE IN THE POPE'S DEFENCE OF THE OPPRESSED—THE KING AND EARL RELEASED—BATTLE OF WILTON—THE PLOUGH RECEIVES THE PRIVILEGES OF SANCTUARY—LAWLESSNESS AND VIOLENT DEATHS OF DE MANDEVILLE AND MARMION—ELECTION OF ST. WILLIAM TO THE SEE OF YORK—THE SCOTTISH CHANCELLOR INVADES THE SEE OF DURHAM—IS EXPELLED—TROUBLES OF THE SEE OF YORK—RE-ELECTION AND DEATH OF ST. WILLIAM.

THE great events of the war had hitherto occurred in the north. They were now beginning to pass to the south. Here, as in other parts, "all things," writes the Waverley Chronicler, "were consuming with slaughter and fire; everywhere outcry, and grief, and horror." Thus had the Christmas of 1140 closed, when men were startled by the tidings of the battle of Lincoln.

The earl of Gloucester had collected a trusty band, composed chiefly of "disinherited" men, and hurrying along the wintry roads, reached at length the banks of the Trent. The swollen waters ran strong and deep, without a ford; but the warriors had but one object before them—to grapple with the enemy. They plunged in, buffeted with the waves, and swam to the opposite bank. There they were charged with lances by the king's knights. Robert's men, however, hewing down or thrusting aside their assailants' weapons, pressed on to closer fight, broke through the king's array, and remained masters of the blood-stained field. In the confusion of defeat, Stephen was beaten to the ground by a stone. One of the combatants immediately

seized upon the nasal piece of the king's helmet, and held him down until he had secured his prize, forcing him to yield himself a prisoner (February, 1141). Many of Stephen's barons shared his fate. The greater part of the citizens of Lincoln, for having called in Stephen against the heroic lady of Lincoln Castle, were put to the sword without mercy.

Henry of Winchester strove to guide these events to a general pacification. He had already exerted himself to make peace, and had even succeeded in bringing about a conference at Bath; but Stephen was not as yet disposed to make terms. When now the king was a prisoner, the legate saw no reason for continuing the struggle. He listened favourably to the messages of the empress, and at last agreed to meet her and her adherents on the open downs, near Winchester. The meeting was there held, according to previous appointment, on a Sunday in March. In the midst of rain, wind, and gloom, the parties met, and the conference opened. Matilda took an oath, that all the more important transactions, and particularly the investitures of bishoprics and abbeys, should be regulated according to Henry's wish, provided "he would receive her in the holy Church as mistress, and observe perpetual fidelity towards her." An oath to the same effect was taken by Robert of Gloucester, by his son Brian, who was known as the marquis of Wallingford, by Milo of Gloucester, afterwards earl of Hereford, and by other powerful adherents of the empress. Henry, therefore, and his friends, swore that they would be faithful to Matilda "as England's mistress," as long as she herself observed the treaty (March 3rd, 1141).

All seemed promising, when a petition of the Londoners to have the good laws of Edward the Confessor, instead of the burthensome enactments of Henry I., awakened the ill-timed resentment of Matilda. Provoked in their turn by her harsh measures, the Londoners flew suddenly to arms, and the empress was soon in headlong flight. The seven weeks' struggle

in the burning houses and churches of Winchester soon told that the fury of the war had redoubled. Again, however, there is hope: Robert of Gloucester is captured and carried to the Castle of Rochester. The proposals that followed were not, however, so much for peace, as for the exchange of Robert for Stephen.

Distrusting the king's firmness, should he be released the first, the captive earl seemed inclined to refuse his assent to the exchange. The two legates, therefore, the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of Winchester, paid him a visit, and pledged their word that, if Stephen slighted his promise, they would immediately themselves become the earl's prisoners. This did not remove his fears of Stephen's fickleness; he required them to give him, under their respective seals, writings to the Pope to the following effect: "May the Apostolic Lord know that for the sake of the king's liberation, and for the peace of the kingdom, they were bound to the earl by this compact, that if the king, after his own liberation, should defer to free him, they, of their own accord, were to surrender themselves to his custody. Therefore, if this misfortune should have befallen them, that they earnestly pray that he would spontaneously free from undeserved chains (which, indeed, it would become the apostolic clemency to do unasked) both those who were his suffragans and the earl likewise."

Confiding in the protection of the Holy See, Robert no longer hesitated. He consented to accompany the two prelates and a crowd of barons to Winchester. Stephen was already there; and, together with the nobles, strove to induce Robert not only to consent to the exchange, but to make peace. The earl, however, refused to abandon the claims of his sister: he was, at last, permitted to withdraw to Oxford, where Matilda was holding her court. The liberation of the two leaders was a signal for more active hostilities. Oxford itself was speedily attacked, and given to the flames. Pursuing his advantage, Stephen met with a

sudden reverse; being encountered and defeated on the plains of Wilton.*

From this moment the war languished. The resources of both parties were too much exhausted to admit of the banding together of great armies; and thus, despite of petty conflicts, the struggle in great measure ceased. Not so the tyranny of many of the barons, or the misery of the nation.

The Church by its censures had checked the amount of evil, giving some protection to the tiller of the soil, by extending the right of sanctuary to the plough itself. Such measures, supported by anathemas and by firmness in their enforcement, quelled those that were not entirely hardened, but were set at nought by others. Thus, in 1143, Geoffrey de Mandeville, being stripped of his possessions by Stephen, and putting aside the fear of God, collected a band of ruffians, entered the abbey of Ramsey, and having expelled the monks, made it his own abode. Robert Marmion, in like manner, seized and fortified the monastic church of Coventry. Both of these invaders were excommunicated; and both, scoffing at the sentence, met with a speedy judgment. Robert, having fallen from his horse in the streets, in a part immediately in front of the monastery, received a mortal wound from the hands of a cobbler; Geoffrey was shot by an archer.†

Thus, the minor evils of the war continued in all their virulence; and nowhere were they more terrible than in the archdiocese of York. The death of Turstin had proved a grievous loss to his diocese. The same energy that had checked the Scottish invasion, had quelled much of the licentiousness of the northern barons. When, however, it was known that the aged archbishop was dead, all the evil-disposed persons in the country were in motion, each pursuing his own career of violence.

* Ges. Steph. an. 1141, 1142; Sax. Chron.; An. Wav.; Will. of Malm. Hist. Nov. l. ii. sect. 29, &c.; l. iii. sect. 38—65; Chron. Gerv.

† Ann. Wav. an. 1143, 1144.

As if the Evil One himself were striving to hinder an archbishop from being chosen, who might curb the licentious, the appointment of Turstin's successor was impeded at every step of its progress. At the persuasion of Henry of Winchester, the electors first chose Henry de Coilli, Stephen's nephew. As, however, this person was abbot of Caen, the Pope annulled the choice, unless Henry should first renounce his abbey.

The electors, therefore, chose St. William, the treasurer of the cathedral. The earl of York had exerted all his influence in favour of this election, while the archdeacon of London, "with his fellow-archdeacons," opposed it. The archdeacons were on their way to Lincoln to complain to the king, when the earl's men surrounded them, and carried them off to his castle of "Biham." The proceedings of both parties were inexcusable. It was wrong, both for the archdeacons to apply to the lay, instead of the spiritual power; and for the earl, however good he might consider his cause, to support it by the injustice of private imprisonment. The earl, however, had calculated like one who knew nothing but war. He wished to gain the royal approbation for St. William. The archdeacons were beforehand with him, and must be shut up, or he must fail. The latter alternative the mere rough soldier could not endure: he seized his prey, and secured the king's approbation.

The approbation thus dearly gained, was little heeded by the abbots of Rievaulx and Fountains, and the priors of Gisburn and Kirkham, and Robert the Hospitaller, who declared that the election had been procured by money; and therefore appealed to the Pope.

When, however, the question was tried by the Pope, the only real charge was, that the earl of York had attempted to overawe the chapter, commanding them in the king's name to choose St. William. The Holy Father decided that if the dean of York would swear, that the earl did not, by any means, give this royal command to the chapter, and if St. William

would pledge himself that he had not given money to secure the dignity, he might at once be solemnly consecrated.

The proceedings were continued, according to the Pope's command, by Henry of Winchester. A provincial council was summoned. No one raised his voice against the saint, while numbers begged, or rather demanded, his consecration. He was, therefore, consecrated by the legate (Sept. 26, 1144).*

One of the first acts of the new archbishop was to terminate some of the most afflicting scenes in the country, by his mediation between William Comyn and William, the bishop of Durham.

The most northern parts of England, as far south, generally speaking, as Penrith and the river Tees, were still held by David, the king of Scotland.

Stephen was as yet a prisoner, and for a few weeks the cause of the empress seemed triumphant. Under these circumstances, the see of Durham being vacant, the chancellor of Scotland, who, according to custom, was a cleric, thought to grasp the bishopric for himself. He secured Durham Castle by bribing the garrison, and through David's representations obtained the consent of the empress. He was utterly heedless of the canons: having trampled upon the law of God, what cared he for the law of God's Church? He looked not to the election of the chapter, nor to any of the other rules or ceremonies, the safeguards by which the Church would restrain both thoughtlessness and malice: he looked only to his being invested with crosier and ring, not by Pope or bishop, but by the empress. By the just judgment of God, his hopes were frustrated. Even after the head and hand of the empress's cause, the earl of Gloucester, had been, as already stated, released, so many losses followed one after another, that at last she was forced to abandon the hopeless contest (A.D. 1146).

Thus far disappointed, the Scottish chancellor still

* John of Hexham, 1142—1145.

kept possession of Durham, watching his opportunities, and by his artful affability endeavouring to win the consent of the chapter. He was again disappointed. The prior went to York, with the secret understanding that the chapter would consent to receive the person elected by him and the "elders of the Church." From York a deputation was sent to Rome. The Pope's permission being obtained, the prior and archdeacon, and other religious of the diocese of Durham, assembled in the church of York, and chose for their bishop William, the dean of that church. He was presented to Henry of Winchester as legate of the Holy See. Henry, having in turn presented him to the king and obtained his consent, consecrated him in the presence of seven other bishops.

Baffled and excommunicated, the Scottish chancellor obstinately persisted in his scheme. The dismal silence of a town under interdict, the cessation of God's praises, shook him not, although this silence made more harrowing the scenes that followed. The streets of Durham exhibited, within a scanty space, all the relentless tyranny that too many a field or castle-dungeon throughout the country had witnessed. The rack for disjoining every limb, the box of small flinty stones for crushing the flesh, every instrument of torture was openly employed. When winter came on in all the severity of the north, a new method of cruelty was tried: citizens were stripped and chained down upon the frozen ground at their own doors, while their feet were fastened to stocks inside the house.

Enough of such horrors: knights and barons thronged together to expel the barbarous chancellor, whilst the soldiers of the latter offered a vigorous but fruitless resistance. The crafty Scot, finding it impossible to hold out, contrived, however, to secure his life: the earl of Richmond was secretly bribed to let him escape. Most of his abettors perished (A.D. 1145). He himself, before he could reach the borders of Scotland, was seized by Richard de Lewetot; and

being thrust into a dungeon, was for many days cruelly tortured by the just judgment of God.*

In the year following, a legate arrived in England with St. William's pallium. The latter showed so little haste about going to receive it, that the legate returned with it to Rome. St. William, therefore, went for it in person. The cardinals were in his favour; but a letter from St. Bernard outweighed their votes; and St. William was required to wait until the bishop of Durham, the former dean of York, had taken oath according to the decree of Pope Innocent.

St. William spent the intermediate time with Robert of Salisbury, chancellor of Roger, king of Sicily. Some of Roger's knights took it into their heads to avenge St. William upon the monks of Fountains, by going to a neighbouring monastery, one of the possessions of those monks, and giving it to the flames. This irrational zeal retarded, instead of promoting, St. William's cause. His peculiar cross was, it seems, to be afflicted both by evil, or too officious friends, and by virtuous, but perhaps mistaken opponents.

In the following year, in a council held in France, Pope Eugenius, "by a general edict," removed St. William from the archbishopric of York, and commanded the chapter of that church and the bishop of Durham to elect in his stead, within forty days, some learned, prudent, and religious man. As the bishop of Durham feared the snares of the hot earl of York, the election was made at Richmond. Here, again, a difficulty arose: one part of the electors chose a clergyman named Hilary; and the other, amongst whom were the two suffragans of Durham and Carlisle, chose Henry Murdac, abbot of Fountains. The Pope cut short the contest by consecrating Henry himself (Advent, 1148).

A new difficulty now arose. Some that had voted for Hilary excited so strong a feeling in the mind of

* Sim. Hist. de Dun. Eccl. ap. Decem Script. p. 63, &c.; John of Hexham, Sim.'s Contin. 1143, 1145.

Stephen, and in the city of York, that when Henry arrived he was refused admittance. He turned aside to Ripon, and excommunicated, most justly, Hugh, the treasurer of the cathedral, who was Stephen's nephew, and all his abettors. Eustace, the king's son and heir, coming to York in the following year, compelled the clergy to perform the divine offices. He and all the contumacious, however, finally submitted, and were absolved. Henry was enthroned on the day of the Conversion of St. Paul, 1152. It would be tedious to narrate the troubles that pursued him until his death, in 1154.*

St. William was now again elected. There was no longer any opposition. He received the pallium, and was welcomed in solemn procession to York. It was the termination of all his trials and labours. He died thirty days after his enthronement (June, 1154).†

* John of Hexham, who here closes.

† Stubbs, p. 1722, ap. Decem Script.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY—ROMANTIC STORY OF THE MARRIAGE OF HIS PARENTS—HIS EARLY LIFE—IS ENROLLED AMONGST THE CLERGY, AND BECOMES ARCHDEACON, OF CANTERBURY—IS MADE CHANCELLOR OF THE KINGDOM—THE ABBOTS OF BATTLE ABBEY AND THE BISHOPS OF CHICHESTER—HENRY'S INTERFERENCE—BOLD SPEECH OF HILARY OF CHICHESTER—WRATH OF HENRY.

THE same year that witnessed the death of St. William, witnessed also the death of Stephen and of his son Eustace, and the cessation of the horrors of civil war. The new king, Henry II., guided by the wisdom of his chancellor, the youthful St. Thomas Becket, took immediate and effectual measures for remedying the nation's innumerable evils.

St. Thomas was a native of London, Gilbert Becket, his father, being a wealthy citizen, and at one time sheriff of the city. Brompton's Chronicle, written in the fourteenth century, gives a romantic, but apparently true, account of Gilbert's marriage. When but a young man, Gilbert went "for the sake of penance" to the Crusades, accompanied by one servant only. Being taken prisoner, he was obliged for a year and a half to work as a slave. During this time, he gained the confidence of his master, the emir. The emir's daughter, after many conversations, offered again and again to embrace his religion, and become his wife. Gilbert feared some deceit, and deferred his answer. At last, early one morning, the prison in which Gilbert had been confined was discovered to be empty: its prisoner and a band of fellow-captives had broken loose. Pursuit was made, but the fugitives reached in safety the borders of the Christians.

The emir's daughter followed their example. She knew, it seems, but two words of English: England,

London. She succeeded, however, in reaching the English capital. There she went up and down the streets, gazing anxiously at every one she met. A crowd of boys and others gathered round her, watching her proceedings, and not withholding the usual derision of an English mob. As they passed tumultuously by the very house in which Gilbert lived, his servant, Richard, attracted by the noise, ran out, and, to his astonishment, saw and recognized the emir's daughter. No less astonished than his servant, and much more perplexed, Gilbert put her under the care of a respectable widow, and consulted the bishop. The bishop baptized the princess, and married her to Gilbert. Whatever be the truth regarding her birth and country, she became the mother of St. Thomas.*

From his earliest years, she taught him (as he often used to relate) to fear God, and in all his occupations to invoke devoutly the ever-blessed Virgin. When St. Thomas had studied in the schools of London, three of which were very famous, he went to the university of Paris, and there spent the flower of his youth. Returning to London, he became one of the sheriff's chaplains. He was always chaste and truthful, but in his earlier years he sought to excel in dress, in hunting and hawking, and indeed in everything. As he was at once witty, eloquent, handsome, and munificent, he acquired universal esteem and love. Whilst he was once pursuing the pastime of hawking, on the banks of a mill-stream, his hawk, swooping upon a duck, missed it, and disappeared under the water. The young cleric, to save the bird, leaped from his saddle into the stream. It was too rapid for him: he was hurried along, despite of his exertions, towards the revolving water-wheel. Just as he reached it, it providentially stopped, and he was taken out half-dead.

From such frivolous occupations, he was now drawn for a while to others that were grave and beneficial. Archdeacon Baldwin and his brother Eustace, both

* Brompton Chron. an. 1163.

attached to the cathedral of Canterbury, were often guests at Sheriff Gilbert's house. By them St. Thomas was introduced to the archbishop, and enrolled amongst his clergy. St. Thomas's learning was scanty enough, when compared with that of his new brethren; but, in the course of time, his great diligence supplied the deficiency. Twice, however, at the instance of Roger, one of his fellow-clerics, and afterwards archbishop of York, he was, for no actual fault, but perhaps for this deficiency, on the very point of being dismissed from the archiepiscopal court.

It was not long, however, before his real value was discovered. Theobald employed him several times as his envoy to Rome. He then ordained him deacon, and, finally, made him archdeacon of the church of Canterbury. Soon after this, King Stephen died, and by the exertions of Theobald and others Henry II. was peaceably enthroned. When, however, Theobald saw the new king's proneness to vice, and the multitude of greedy flatterers by whom he was surrounded, he began to tremble for Henry's soul, and even for his own, having such a charge. He hoped, however, that a good chancellor might do much to avert these impending dangers. He therefore proposed, and, supported by Henry of Winchester, obtained, that Thomas Becket should be made chancellor of the kingdom (A.D. 1155). In this new office, "he put aside," says De Boscama, "the levite," "and put on the chancellor." He proved, however, such a chancellor as is seldom seen. The vacant sees were speedily filled, and the whole country, still palpitating from the shock of civil war, was quieted. The new castles, mere nests of banditti, were destroyed; the mercenaries were expelled; and trade and agriculture were thoroughly reinvigorated.

The fame of the new chancellor spread far and wide; and soon the nobles, not only of England, but of the neighbouring countries, confided the education of their children to his care. Henry, the king's eldest son, was amongst the number.

The chancellor's house was anything but a place of seclusion. His table was spread for all that came on business to the court of Chancery, rich or poor, provided their character was good. Almost every day, barons and knights were present, and sometimes the king himself. Yet in this tumult of pomp or business, or even of the pleasures of the chase, which he still followed, St. Thomas is unanimously declared by his contemporaries, to have been condescending and affable, frugal and chaste.*

One of the earliest facts of consequence in which the new chancellor was engaged, hinged upon some of those very principles for which he afterwards shed his blood (A.D. 1157).

The abbots of Battle Abbey had long claimed exemption from the jurisdiction of the see of Chichester. Founded by the Conqueror, on the spot on which Harold fought and died at Hastings, the abbey had been peopled with Norman monks, and had been, in every possible way, enriched and privileged. One privilege there was, no other than exemption from episcopal jurisdiction, which William pretended to confer, but which neither he had the power to give nor the abbot to accept. This was more than even the archbishop of Canterbury could have granted: a concession limiting the jurisdiction of the bishop, can only emanate from the power which confers that jurisdiction.

* William FitzStephen, Vita, &c. with Desc. Lond. ap. Sparke, pp. 4, 10, 12, and 16; Chron. Gerv. &c.; Herb. de Boseham, l. ii. c. 1—12, ap. Giles, 1845; Ed. Grim. pp. 6—9, ap. Giles.

FitzStephen was one of St. Thomas's clergy. He was present with the saint at the famous Council of Northampton. He witnessed his martyrdom.—See his Pref. to the Life of St. Thomas.

Herbert de Boseham was another of St. Thomas's clergy; he was a native of Boseham in Sussex; he was in his service when St. Thomas was chancellor; witnessed his consecration, was present at the royal councils at Clarendon and Northampton, and returned with him from his exile.—See Giles's Pref. to Boseham's works.

De Boseham, however, wrote in extreme old age, and apparently from memory. It is, therefore, to be expected, that in his account some minor inaccuracies should be found. He is conscious at times that his memory had failed him.—See pp. 1, 2, 97, and 102.

This power, as all Catholics knew, resided in the Holy See. Yet this it was which William pretended to exercise; and by William's charter, successive abbots struggled for seventy years, with more or less success, to resist the authority of the see of Chichester. On the death of one of the abbots, St. Anselm seems to have had hopes of quietly terminating the question. At all events, he pointed out Henry, a monk of Canterbury, as a fit candidate, and having procured his election, counselled him to go to Chichester, to receive the episcopal blessing. This was equivalent to a renunciation of the point in dispute, and accordingly, Henry, by his compliance, became unpopular amongst his subjects of Battle Abbey.

When Henry was no more, the dispute revived, and towards the end of the reign of Stephen, and again at the beginning of that of Henry II., the abbot fell under the excommunication of Hilary, who was now the bishop of Chichester.

Instead of making the usual appeal to the archbishop, and then to Rome, the abbot trusted to the power of the crown; and although on the death of Stephen he seems to have consulted the archbishop, he had recourse, on the first opportunity, to the assistance of the young Henry, and succeeded in procuring a confirmation of the privilege under the royal seal. As, however, this grant was immediately called in question, the case was examined at Lambeth by the archbishop, in presence of the chancellor and many others. During the proceedings, the disputed charter was produced and read. At the words, "the church of Battle Abbey should be free from all subjection to bishops, like Christ-church, Canterbury," the reading was interrupted by a variety of outcries. Some exclaimed, that it was against the canons; some, that it was against the dignity of the church of Canterbury; and some (the most clamorous of all), that it decided the question. The reading being at last completed, and none of the bishop of Chichester's predecessors being among those that had subscribed to the

charter, the decision was given against the abbot, the charter lately granted being taken away, and placed in the Chapel Royal. Notwithstanding this formal sentence, the abbot persisted in his appeal to the king : he approached Henry with gifts, and obtained a promise of support. The king, soon after, called the bishops and nobles to a great council in the Chapter-house of Colchester. When the real object of the council, the furtherance of the abbot's wishes, was laid open, Hilary was so completely taken by surprise, that he had not the heart to stand upon his rights, but asked only for terms of peace. The abbot pressing his advantage, declared that the matter should not be left to his successors to settle. Upon hearing this, the bishop aroused himself, and began a speech full of energy and argument. "My lord and king," he said, "Jesus Christ—hear all, and understand—Jesus Christ our Lord established, in the arrangement of this world, two powers, one spiritual and the other material. To the Apostle Peter he intrusted the former : 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.' This apostolic rule has been continued in the Roman Church, so that no ecclesiastical personage can be deposed without its permission." The king here interrupted him, exclaiming, with outstretched hands, "No, he cannot be deposed, but he may be expelled." The courtiers laughed, of course ; but the bishop fearlessly continued : "Thus has the Church been constituted from ancient times. Nor can a layman, even though he be a king, confer upon any churches ecclesiastical privileges, without the sanction of the same father, the Pope."

The king angrily interrupted him with the exclamation : "You think to rely on crafty arguments against the authority granted me by God. On your oath of fealty, I command you to surrender yourself to justice for your presumptuous words against the dignity of my crown. I crave the archbishop and bishops now present to render me justice against you, saving the rights of my supreme majesty. For you

are attacking my regal dignities and the ancient liberties of my crown."

Great confusion followed this passionate outburst: the creatures of the court were loud in their applause, but the chancellor, St. Thomas, seems to have openly encouraged Hilary to persevere.*

The bishop protested that what he said was dictated by solicitude for the king's honour, and still undaunted by the derisive remarks of Henry, and the interruptions of two powerful friends of the abbot, made a resolute defence of his right, and closed with a request that Henry would permit the matter to be "determined by the ancient and just teaching of the canons," and "according to ecclesiastical usages."

After much discussion, the archbishop made the same petition. The king refused to acquiesce; and then, at last betraying the cause which he had so nobly defended, Hilary suddenly yielded to the king's

* In the "History of Battle Abbey" (Hist. Monast. de Bello), this encouragement given by St. Thomas is by no means evident; but the sense has plainly been tampered with, and it seems that no manuscript can be found to supply what has been thus wilfully mutilated. The editor, however, of the History—himself not only a Protestant, but writing for a Protestant society—assures us, that despite of these "utterly senseless" erasures, the mutilated remark of St. Thomas "was some compliment addressed to the bishop." He adds: "I may observe, the word Papa (Pope) is generally carefully blotted out." That the words of St. Thomas were, indeed, not in favour of Henry, but of Hilary, the erasure itself sufficiently proves. In a subsequent part of the Chronicle, it may be added, the martyr is called an advocate of the abbot's claims. This, however, may be explained by the notorious partiality of the chronicler to his own community, as well as by the fact, which such a writer would be sure to interpret in his own favour, that St. Thomas, being chancellor, was employed to read the decision of the king and his council against Hilary.

In the midst of so much tampering with historical documents, one is disagreeably surprised to find that in Wilkins's Concilia there is a remarkable interpolation. He professes to quote from Spelman, but gives the following words as part of Henry's interruption of Hilary's speech:—"You rely on crafty arguments in support of the Pope's *authority granted by men* against the authority granted me by God;" whereas, the phrase, "the Pope's authority granted by men," does not occur in Spelman.—Hist. Monast. de Bello, p. 91, note, &c.

judgment and the abbot's claims.* Such was the unexpected close of this lengthened contest. Whatever were its other consequences, there can be no doubt that it strengthened in the young king those despotic tendencies, which he had reluctantly suffered to be curbed in the recent pacification of the baronage, and which, in course of time, turned especially against the liberties of the Church.

* See Hist. Monast. de Bello, 1846, passim.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE CHANCELLOR CONSECRATED TO THE SEE OF CANTERBURY—THE FESTIVAL OF TRINITY SUNDAY—MORTIFIED LIFE OF THE NEW ARCHBISHOP—THE KING'S GROWING ALIENATION—PHILIP DE BROU—FIRMNESS OF ST. THOMAS—A SYNOD REGARDING THE PENALTIES IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL COURTS—THE KING'S "CUSTOMS"—THE COUNCIL AND CONSTITUTIONS OF CLARENDON—ST. THOMAS PROMISES TO OBSERVE THE "ANCIENT CUSTOMS"—A WRITTEN COPY IS DRAWN UP—ST. THOMAS'S COMMENTS—THE "CUSTOMS" ARE CONDEMNED BY THE HOLY SEE—COUNCIL OF NORTHAMPTON — FRUITLESS INTIMIDATION — ESCAPE OF ST. THOMAS.

ON the death of Theobald of Canterbury, it became immediately known through all the country, that the king intended to procure the vacant see for his chancellor (A.D. 1162). Nothing could be more popular than such a choice. Yet it was felt by many that it would be a dangerous precedent, to listen too readily to the king's desire; whilst, on the other hand, high as the chancellor's character stood as a royal minister, yet the fact of his having more than once put on hauberk and helmet, and led his men to the attack, and covered the retreat of the royal army, and stormed castles, and overthrown one knight, at least, in single combat, appeared unseemly in one who, though not yet a priest, was at once a dean, canon, and archdeacon. He himself felt how unsuitable was his life as a courtier, to what it ought to be as archbishop. Lifting up a portion of his rich dress before the king's eyes, "How religious—how holy a man," he exclaimed, with a smile, "do you desire to have appointed!" He added an assurance that, if Henry were serious, their friendship would soon cease: the king would interfere in ecclesiastical matters, and when checked would be

goaded on by flatterers to a lasting hatred. Henry listened, but kept to his determination.

St. Thomas was at last chosen unanimously. Only one voice dissented, if indeed it can be said to have dissented, from the general applause that welcomed this choice: Gilbert Foliot, bishop of Hereford, and afterwards (through the exertions of St. Thomas), of London, remarked, that the king had wrought a miracle, by changing a man of the world, and a kind of knight, into an archbishop.*

It was the archbishop of York's place to consecrate the new archbishop elect, and he claimed his right; but the suffragans of Canterbury declined to admit it, on the ground of his refusal to make profession of obedience to the primate. The new archbishop was therefore consecrated by Henry of Blois, the aged bishop of Winchester. He celebrated his first episcopal mass on the day of his consecration, the Octave of Whitsunday; and ordered that the festival of the Holy Trinity should be solemnly kept on that octave-day for ever.†

Well knowing that his duties as an archbishop were little compatible with those of a royal minister, St. Thomas no longer appeared at court; and having no longer occasion for worldly pomp, he put it aside, as a thing not evil in itself, but no longer necessary. As chancellor, he had adopted a policy and line of conduct suitable to the defence of earthly justice, and the maintenance of the royal power and dignity. As archbishop, he had but one thing to do—to cultivate the vineyard confided to him.

Every day in secret he washed the feet of thirteen of the poor. He distributed frequent and most abundant alms. He continually meditated on the Holy Scriptures. He wore a hair-shirt. He gave his shoulders frequently to wholesome discipline. It was

* FitzSteph. pp. 23 and 24; Herbert de Boseham, l. iii. c. 1; Chron. Gerv. pp. 1383, 1384; Gerv. Act. Pont. Cant. p. 1668.

† "Instituit festivitatem principalem Sanctæ Trinitatis singulis annis in perpetuum, die octavarum Pentecostes," &c.—Chron. Gerv. ib.

only, however, in the course of time, that these penitential practices were discovered.

The king expected to find in the archbishop the same cheerful, witty companion, the same zealous servant, as in the archdeacon and chancellor. His mortification on learning his mistake did not escape the observant eyes of his courtiers. Eager to promote their own advantage by studying and flattering every whim of their master, they now ceased to extol the late chancellor, and soon found matter enough to feed the anger and jealousy of Henry. The king's chaplains, forgetting the mission that had been given them, and fearing that the new archbishop would deprive them of certain churches to which their title was more than doubtful, encouraged, instead of repressing, these vague insinuations.*

One of the first events that proved to the king that the archbishop was not to be made his creature, was the freedom with which the latter withstood an unjust demand.

The king was accustomed to appoint a sheriff over each county. To secure his good-will, he received a free contribution from the barons of the county at a certain fixed rate per hide. Henry wished to consider this money as his own, to be raised and used at his own discretion. This he formally proposed in a great council at Woodstock. There was at first a general silence. The archbishop of Canterbury then quietly said, "My lord, it is not fitting for you to apply another's benefices to your own uses, especially as the two solidi are bestowed upon your ministers, not by necessity, nor as a debt, but rather gratuitously. For if your sheriffs behave peaceably and moderately towards our men, we will give with pleasure; otherwise, indeed, we will not give, nor can we be compelled by law." The king could not endure freedom of speech, even in a baron and archbishop; he wrathfully swore that the money should be entered upon his rent-rolls, and that in this the archbishop ought to

* Chron. Gerv. an. 1162, 1163; FitzSteph. pp. 23—28.

submit to his will. The archbishop, knowing well that Henry had no claim whatever to the money, declared it should not be given from his land.* The council broke up; but Henry was not the man to forgive and forget.

Circumstances soon occurred that added greatly to the king's growing coolness. Several clerics, forgetting the dignity of their character, had committed various crimes, and had been thrown into chains. One was not only a cleric, but a priest. His impeachment was for homicide. No direct and conclusive proof was adduced, although there were probable arguments, and recourse was therefore had to "canonical purgation." In this the accused failed. He was therefore deprived of every ecclesiastical "benefice," and was shut up in a monastery to undergo severe penance for the rest of his life. About the same time a canon of Bedford, named Philip de Broc, was accused of having slain a certain knight. The charge was not proved; but, to make known his innocence more fully, Philip attested it by a public oath.

Simon FitzPeter, a royal judge, took it into his head to try Philip again. As the trial had already been completed, and, still more, as by old and as yet existing practice, the clergy were not to be tried in the secular courts, Philip very justly refused to answer. FitzPeter insisted.† Philip, unfortunately for his own cause, lost patience; and poured a torrent of invectives upon one whom he had reason to consider as an encroacher upon his rights, but whom he ought still to have respected as the king's representative. The judge complained to Henry.

* Roger de Pont. p. 113, &c., apud Giles.

† It was now that the report was spread, that some of the clergy had perpetrated a hundred homicides. It need scarcely be remarked that the term "clergy" may apply to persons who are neither priests, deacons, subdeacons, nor even in minor orders, having merely received the initiatory ceremony of the tonsure. The vagueness of the report speaks for itself: "Denique ipso audiente declaratum dicitur plus quam centum homicidia intra fines Angliæ a clericis sub regno ejus commissas."—Will. of Newbury, l. ii. c. 16.

The king swore, in his blasphemous manner, that Philip should suffer for it, and gave orders that he should be judged without delay. The archbishop interposed. The faults of a cleric, he remonstrated, are to be tried in the ecclesiastical courts. If the king or his knight complain that Philip has transgressed, let him be sent to Canterbury, and tried in the ecclesiastical court, and he will undergo a just sentence.

The king was violently excited at this reasonable demand; but the archbishop was firm. Whilst, however, the latter refused a new trial as being unjust, he appointed a day for receiving the new charge of contempt of the king's judge. This Philip did not attempt to deny, but of his own accord offered to make full satisfaction.

The king's emissaries were watching the proceedings. They had that very morning demanded again a repetition of his trial for the death of the knight; but had met with a decided refusal. Now that Philip made no defence, they were so eager, that instead of maintaining a decent silence, they exclaimed, rushing forward, "We demand judgment for an injury which is evident and not denied." The sentence was severe, considering the circumstances by which Philip's anger had been excited: he was to surrender to the king for two years his prebend and its revenues; he was to present himself unarmed before FitzPeter, and make him satisfaction for the insult; and was to be even publicly whipped.*

Henry's practice, however, was the summary and ruthless one of plucking out the eyes, lopping off foot or hand, and other like revolting methods of vengeance. He was, therefore, angry that Philip had escaped his fangs; and as some other clerics had been convicted of great crimes, he began to indulge in wrathful feelings and expressions against the whole order, "as if," remarks Herbert de Boseham, "on a

* Roger de Pont. Vita Sti. Tho. p. 114, &c. ap. Giles; Herb. de Boseh. Vita, p. 100, &c.

spot being found on some insignificant part of the body, forthwith a judgment were to be made that the whole body was covered with filthy marks." As each year rolled by, the king had to punish merchants, soldiers, knights, sometimes even barons and judges; yet for the crimes of a few, he never hated the entire body of judges, or knights, or merchants. Most unjust would it have been to do so; equally unjust, then, and more scandalous was it, to speak of the clergy as if all were as culpable as the few. On the other hand, it appears from William of Newbury's statement,* that although great crimes on the part of clergymen were unusual, there were many of a less heinous character, for which, nevertheless, the canonical punishment was degradation; and that in exacting this punishment, some of the bishops were very negligent. This, however, can be no reason for Henry's conduct: he knew that he had but to apply to Rome, and could not fail to obtain both an investigation and a remedy.

In reality, this feeling seems to have been caused by the just contradictions which he received from the clergy; and from the instinct of despots to hate, and if possible to trample upon, what puts a limit to their headstrong will. It sprang up in Henry's breast even in the time of Archbishop Theobald, but was held in check by the archbishop's firmness.† As Henry still pressed for severer punishments, deprivation, exile, penance in monasteries, not being, he said, sufficient, a council of the bishops and clergy, at St. Thomas's request, was summoned to Westminster. In this council, St. Thomas pointed out that it was the ancient privilege of clerics to be tried by their own spiritual courts, and that mutilation of the body was

* Lib. ii. c. 16.

† See the account of this transaction in FitzSteph. pp. 209—214, ap. Giles. Although, from the context, the whole of the account appears to refer to Theobald, and that towards the end of his life, it is to be lamented, that although it is thrown into the life of St. Thomas as an episode, it should have its limits so faintly sketched, and should be utterly devoid of dates.

unknown to such courts. Unknown too, he added, is branding, a punishment which even the law of secular courts condemns, lest the image of God should be defaced in man.

In these our courts, he continued, provision is made both for majesty and for clemency. When once a cleric is deprived, he ceases to be a cleric, he becomes a subject of the secular courts. If he again transgress, he is not brought for judgment to the ecclesiastical courts, he is punished by the unimpeded course of common secular law.*

The whole council was unanimous in supporting St. Thomas. The king, being, as usual, impatient and wrathful at such a manifestation, turned at last to another though a kindred question. He asked whether they would observe his customs. St. Thomas took the opinions of his fellow-bishops, and then replied that he would, "saving his order." Each bishop replied in the same manner, except the poor trembling Hilary of Chichester. Hilary's only clause was "*bonâ fide*," in place of the ordinary form, "saving my order." Those that thus adopt a middle course when great principles are at issue, seldom profit by their cowardice. Hilary incurred the reproof of his archbishop, and instead of winning the smile of his king, he even attracted upon his own head a storm of reproaches. It was now the dusk of evening; and suddenly, without taking leave, the angry king strode away from the council. The next morning, even before daylight, he demanded and received the fortresses which had been intrusted to the archbishop when chancellor. He then at once departed, without a word of civility. Some of the bishops became alarmed for their own safety, and followed him. The archbishop and a few others continued the session, in hopes, however faint, that Henry would return when his anger had subsided. Many persons of rank, meantime, passed to and fro between the king and archbishop, endeavouring to produce a reconciliation.

* Herb. de Bosh. pp. 102—108.

It was evident, however, that this was only to be obtained by the abandonment of the clause. Hilary of Chichester, relying upon his well-tried eloquence, pressed the archbishop to follow his example. The peace of the Church, he suggested, was the greatest consideration. Why endanger it, why plunge into a strife so fearful for the sake of a word? He forgot that the preservation of peace would be an argument equally plausible, no matter what might be given up. He forgot the maxim: "Resist the beginnings." St. Thomas's reply was a rebuke for his rash change of the clause. Hilary being thus silenced, others repeated his advice, and especially the earl of Vendome, Robert de Meldun, who was soon afterwards consecrated bishop of Hereford, and the abbot de Elemosina. The abbot stated that it was the Pope's desire that he should yield to the king's wishes, and that Henry had taken an oath that he would not injure the Church, and only desired to be honoured before his nobles. The Pope's desire must have had weight, although in such matters he may be deceived, and although a verbal expression of his desire was scarcely to be relied upon. The other arguments were scarcely deserving of notice. St. Thomas must have known that a love of truth was not one of Henry's virtues; and the desire to be honoured where no honour is due, is simply contemptible. Yet to be pressed thus by some of the good and many of the noble, is enough to make a very stout heart quail. No wonder that St. Thomas began to hesitate. The peculiar danger in which the bishop of Winchester and Joceline of Salisbury were placed, from hatred long since displayed on the part of the king, shook the archbishop's firmness more than arguments or entreaties: he consented to forego the obnoxious clause, and hastened to Oxford castle to inform Henry of his intention.*

The king exulted at his victory; but said: "It is fitting that this should be done publicly, in order to

* Herb. de Bosc. pp. 109—115, Giles.

remove the stain upon my honour. Do you then call the bishops, abbots, and other ecclesiastics, and I will summon the nobles." The place appointed for the meeting was Clarendon. When it assembled, and, indeed, even before, it had become evident that Henry's wrath would now be poured out upon St. Thomas, unless he completely yielded. Some of the archbishop's own household, and amongst them the archdeacons of Oxford and Chichester, had begged and obtained leave to withdraw. Two others, John, treasurer of York cathedral, and John, a canon of Salisbury, whose counsel would have been of great service to the saint, had been removed by Henry; one to become bishop of Poitiers, and the other to go into exile.* Resuming now his former sternness, Henry in a somewhat menacing tone, required the fulfilment of the archbishop's promise (Jan. 14, 1164).

All that had as yet occurred since his visit to Oxford castle, had tended to awaken St. Thomas's fears of the king's intentions: he therefore declined. To be thus baffled, a second time, was more than a man of Henry's passionate temper could endure: his fury broke out before the whole court. The bishops saw on his darkened brow what was no less plain from his words. Nothing less than imprisonment, banishment, and death. While they were yielding to their fears, and entreating the undaunted and even cheerful archbishop to save himself, his clergy, and them, the earls of Leicester and Cornwall approached, and told him that, unless he complied, they would be obliged by Henry's order, notwithstanding the infamy it would bring upon the king and themselves, to have recourse to violence. Seeing the archbishop's firmness, two Templars, especial friends of Henry, threw themselves upon their knees, and, with tears and sobs, implored the saint to provide for himself, and to have mercy on his clergy, and assured him that the king's only object was to prevent his appearing to be conquered by the archbishop. Yield to the king but this

* FitzSteph. p. 33.

word, and you will never again hear of the customs. Do him this honour before his nobles, and all enmity will be forgotten. By this time soldiers, with glittering battle-axes, were seen flitting to and fro, as if preparing for extremities.

It was not the first time that an archbishop was entrapped by representations so specious. Moved, though not intimidated, the archbishop now gave his word to observe the ancient customs of the realm.*

They were not, however, forthcoming. Some indeed were drawn up in writing; but others were vaguely mentioned, being evidently not well known. In this hesitating pause, St. Thomas remarked that he was not one of the elders of the kingdom, and had been archbishop but a short time, and therefore could not be expected to know the customs; and proposed that the council should be adjourned. The day, indeed, was already far spent; and, accordingly, the meeting broke up.†

On the following morning, the king, after a few words upon the business of the previous day, despatched some of the older barons to reduce to writing the customs of his grandfather Henry I. It might have been objected to this, that many of Henry the First's customs had been cancelled; some by himself, and some by Stephen. Nothing, however, was then said, and the deed was prepared. It has ever since been known under the title of the "Constitutions of Clarendon."

The following were among the most important of its clauses. If a controversy arise with regard to tithes, or to advowsons, whether between clerics or between a cleric and a layman, it shall be decided in the king's court. If a cleric be tried for a criminal offence, he shall first be examined in the king's court. No baron, no official of the king, shall be excommunicated

* Roger de Pont. 123—125, Giles; Chron. Gerv. an. 1163.

"Promisitque in verbo sacerdotali de plano se velle avitas consuetudines regni custodire."—(Fitz.) This promise, after all, then, was not a promise to keep whatever Henry chose to call the customs, but only to keep the *ancient* customs.

† De Boseham, p. 115.

without his consent; nor any one dwelling in the royal castles and manors, without the cognizance of the chief officer of the place. The order of appeals, shall be from dean to archdeacon, from archdeacon to bishop; then to the archbishop, and then to the king; and not even then to the Pope, without the king's leave. No bishop or clergyman, whether summoned by the Pope, or appealing to him, or defending themselves against an appeal, shall go to the Holy See; or, in any case, go out of the kingdom, without the king's leave. Vacant sees or priories shall be in the king's custody. The king's assent shall be necessary for the election to such churches; and this election shall be made in the king's chapel.*

When copies of this instrument were produced, and when, point by point, the customs were read, St. Thomas interrupted the reader to make repeated comments. When, for instance, that article was read which required bishops and barons to ask permission before ever leaving the kingdom, and to give some security for their good behaviour, he remarked, that this would stop pilgrimages and the fulfilment of vows, would make the kingdom a prison, and would render the condition of the dignitaries of the realm worse than that of private persons. Suppose, as sometimes happened, a misunderstanding arose between the king and the Pope, and the latter should summon to a council, while the former were to prohibit their departure? Was the vicar of Christ, or an earthly lord, to be obeyed? The former, certainly, as they must obey God rather than man. Being, however, bound to the king as his lieges, it would be proper to obtain his permission before their departure; but to bind themselves by oath not to go without his permission, would be irreligious and indecent.

When the point regarding appeals was read, the archbishop stood up, and exclaimed, that if the archbishops consented to this, they would be guilty of

* Compare Chron. Gerv. pp. 1386 and 1387, ap. Decem Script.; FitzSteph. p. 33; Herb. de Bosc. p. 116, &c.; 5th and 73rd Ep. St. Thos., ap. Giles; and Roger de Wend. an. 1164.

manifest perjury, since at the time when they received the pallium they took an express oath to present themselves at the Holy See.

When mention was made of elections in the royal chapel, he declared that it was contrary to "the received sanctions of the Holy Fathers;" and that to abandon those sanctions for one's own private views and opinions, was to create a schism in the Church. It was said, in reply, that in times past this had been done by some kings. St. Thomas answered, If so, it has been a tyrannical usurpation, not a legitimate rule. It was true, indeed, that the Old and New Testament, and the early history of the Church, show that princes sometimes took part in the ecclesiastical business and elections; but the discipline of the Holy Fathers was not always the same, differing according to the progress of the faith and the vicissitudes of the Church. One rule was necessary at the commencement of the Church, and a very different one when the Church had become "the pride" of the world; but that for the time being this rule was always to be adhered to: "It would be by no means safe to recede, without the authority of the Church, from that form of election which the universal Church now receives, approves, and observes."*

Some of these customs, it may be added, had never before been heard of. The rest had never been the practice, had never been even attempted to be put in practice, except by such manifest tyrants as Rufus and Henry I.; and had been firmly resisted by the three archbishops, Lanfranc, St. Anselm, and Theobald. Henry I. and Stephen had, however, formally abandoned them. Yet all were now to be formally yielded, as if they had always been the acknowledged rights of the crown; as if they had never been resisted; as if liberty, so dear to man, so necessary for the welfare of the kingdom, were not equally dear to men as children of the Church, or were not equally

* Hist. de Bosc. pp. 116—122, ap. Giles.

necessary for the appointed mission of the Church itself.

The deans and archdeacons were constantly in communication, on the one hand, with the parish priests, settling the more difficult cases of conscience, or maintaining discipline; and, on the other, with their respective bishops, to whom they sometimes referred the more intricate cases, or applied for greater powers. The necessities of multitudes of souls, in one form or other, were thus daily engrossing the thoughts, and consuming the spirits, and very life, of zealous priests and bishops. From the prelates, moreover, a constant stream of applications for the solution of greater difficulties was constantly passing to the Holy See. Letters were daily arriving there; and not only letters, but bishops and clergy too, from all parts of the island, each bearing in his soul his load of secret grief, whether his own or those of his spiritual children, whose wounds he himself was powerless to heal. Back from the same sole fountain of jurisdiction was gushing towards our island, as, indeed, towards every part of the Church, another stream of decrees, privileges, dispensations; healing consolation, in short, in one form or another. This stream of life, this spiritual vivifying circulation, is the heart's blood of the Church. The prelates are, therefore, bound by solemn oath at the time of their consecration, to visit the Holy See in person, if possible, once at least in every three years. Such an oath seems to be a provision against the sloth and worldly-mindedness of those unhappy pastors that live for themselves, and not for God and their flock.

With the will of the Church thus strongly expressed, not in words only, but in living action, how was it to be endured that a child of that Church should presume to dictate to his mother, to a mother the spouse of the Crucified One, and clothed by Him in some of His own prerogatives? How was it to be endured that, strutting his short hour upon the stage, this king of a corner of the earth should presume to remodel the

constitution of that Church which he acknowledged was not made by hands, but was the work of God?

Well might the archbishop stand as if stupified, and pore over the copy which had been put into his hands, like one who could not well decipher its contents. His mind, however, was now soon made up. When asked to attach his seal, he refused; saying in a loud voice, so that all could hear, that he had never promised to confirm the customs, but that, having seemed to resist the king for a time, he had promised to honour him in the presence of his nobles, by word of mouth.* He saw now what it was to yield one tittle to such a king: Henry's express promises, made through his most trusty advisers, were to be overlooked, but the archbishop's general promise was to be made binding in a sense stricter than he had intended, and was to be applied to all the acts of tyranny which the Norman kings had ever exercised against the Church; and still more, this promise was not only to be committed to writing, but was to be confirmed by the archiepiscopal seal. Having, therefore, expressed his positive refusal, he withdrew from the council. In punishment of his rash promise, he refrained from the Holy Sacrifice; fasted; wore the garb of a penitent; despatched a messenger to the Pope, then residing at Sens, to implore absolution; and strove, meantime, to induce the bishops to recall their rash promises. Finding this attempt baffled by the malice of some, and the terror of others, he endeavoured, at least, to do his own part.

* FitzStephen says that he attached "his seals;" Gervase states that St. Thomas positively refused. The detail, simplicity, and distinctness of Gervase's Chronicle, himself being a monk of Canterbury at this very time, give it an appearance of truthfulness and authority incomparably superior to the rhetorical style and vague description which are sometimes, and especially in this part, the characteristics of FitzStephen's biography. The latter, however, describes copiously and clearly the Council of Clarendon, which soon followed, and at which he was present. De Boseham (p. 124, ap. Giles), Roger de Pontig. (p. 127, ap. Giles), and Edward Grim (p. 31, ap. Giles), are as clear and full of details as Gervase, and agree with him that no seal was attached.

He went, therefore, to Woodstock, where the king was then residing: but, although he was head of Christianity in this country, he was driven from the gates. Returning to Canterbury, and unable to bear the insults and afflictions which were heaped upon his clergy, he attempted to quit the country. He embarked without the knowledge of his attendants; but the winds were contrary, and he was driven back to the shores of Kent.*

The king, meantime, had been striving to procure from Rome the confirmation of the "customs;" and, at the same time, the legatine power for the archbishop of York. The Pope, however, condemned the customs; but wishing to gratify Henry as far as conscience would allow, granted the legatine power. Henry was so enraged at the condemnation of the customs, that he sent back the instrument which contained the grant of this power. A great council of the barons was now assembling at Northampton; but every circumstance connected with it boded evil. The writ to the archbishop was not, as usual, the first that was issued, nor was it directed to himself: it reached him only through the hands of the sheriff of Kent, and in the form of a citation, to answer before the king in a case of appeal from John Marescal. When moreover, the business of the council began, Henry withheld the usual kiss of peace. The case of John Marescal was speedily introduced. John had applied in the archbishop's court for some land attached to an archiepiscopal farm. Not succeeding in his suit, he had applied to the king, and the archbishop had been cited to the royal courts. Instead of going in person, which might have become a precedent for such appeals, he sent four knights, with

* FitzSteph. p. 35; Chron. Gerv.; Herb. de Bosc. p. 130, &c. Herbert says the archbishop obtained an interview, but that he was received with less honour than usual. He also states that St. Thomas's attempt to cross the sea was before he went to Woodstock. The observation already made regarding this writer should be borne in mind on these occasions.

letters both from himself and from the sheriff of Kent, to attest John's injustice, and his want of proof.

For this refusal to obey the citation in person, the archbishop was now accused of high treason. The whole council formed the court of judges. They found him guilty, and subjected all his goods, according to the phrase of the day, to the king's mercy. This "amerciament," as it was sometimes termed, did not in reality amount to anything like a general confiscation, but to a fine, varying according to the custom of each locality. The barons were unwilling to pronounce this sentence themselves: they left it to the bishops. The latter replied that it was rather the place of the barons, the judgment there being secular, and not ecclesiastical; that they were there not as bishops but as barons; and that as bishops, they could not judge their archbishop and lord. The marked impatience of Henry put an end to the dispute. The bishop of Winchester was called upon to pronounce sentence. He reluctantly obeyed. All the bishops stood surety for the archbishop, except one. This single exception was Gilbert of London, late of Hereford.*

Other demands now followed in quick succession. The archbishop was required to account for three hundred pounds connected with his wardenship of the castles of Eye and Berkhamstead; for five hundred marks lent him during the expedition of Toulouse; for another five hundred for the king's being surety to some Jew there; and for sums received, during his chancellorship, from vacant sees and abbeys. The archbishop said, that the money stated to have been lent him, was openly given to him; but he added, that he had not been cited to answer to such charges, and was not prepared: he would answer at the place and time appointed by the law. The king required sureties for this; a demand certainly illegal, the citation having been made for one specified object only. The archbishop answered,

* FitzSteph. pp. 35—37.

that he must first consult his suffragans and clergy. Accordingly, he withdrew to a separate apartment, and asked their opinions. Gilbert Foliot, who, as bishop of London, was dean of the province of Canterbury, advised St. Thomas to submit, if it were to ten times as much, adding, that if he humbled himself now to Henry, he would probably recover everything. The aged Henry of Winchester said that thus to yield to the king's threat, would be a most pernicious example. Hilary of Chichester thought that there should not be too much strictness: it would be better to yield for a time. Exeter thought as Chichester; and Worcester almost as Winchester, but in a style obscured by fear and caution. St. Thomas now asked for more time. The king repeated his demands, but granted the desired respite. St. Thomas quitted the castle, and went to his lodgings.

From that day, the obsequious barons discontinued their visits to the archbishop.

The next day, the fourth of the council, the bishops in a body, and then the abbots in a separate body, went to the archbishop, to assist him with their advice. The aged Henry of Winchester, in whom worldly wisdom was deeply rooted, advised him to soften the king's mind by a liberal offer of money. He, therefore, offered two thousand marks. They were refused.

The advice now given him by some of the clergy, was more worthy of the true independence of those that "fear the king" only because they love and fear the King of kings. They advised St. Thomas to honour the king, but not so as to forget his own character and the honour of God and the Church. The revenues of the church of Canterbury have nothing to do with the chancellorship and the secular complaints of the king. If a monk, they continued, when chosen from one abbey to be abbot of another, is freed from all obedience to his former abbot, how much more is he freed from his former obedience, who from being chancellor has been

made archbishop. Others of a more courtly stamp, and amongst them Hilary of Chichester, told him plainly, that Henry would not be satisfied unless he put himself entirely at his mercy—even with the surrender, amongst everything else, of his archbishopric. Hilary, as if he feared that his own sentiments were not as yet sufficiently plain, added: “Would that you were not the archbishop, but merely Thomas.” Then, with many other remarks, he told him that Henry was reported to have said, that both king and archbishop should no longer remain in England: that one must go. It would be better to leave all to his mercy, continued the craven bishop, rather than incur his vengeance, to the grief of all the churches, and the shame of the kingdom.

“God forbid,” exclaimed a bystander, “that he should thus provide for himself and the safety of his person; and dishonour the church of Canterbury, which has chosen him. None of his predecessors did so, and yet they suffered persecution in those times.”

Thus, in taking counsel, such as it was, afflicting as it often became, passed the Saturday and Sunday. On the Monday, St. Thomas was seized with illness. As soon as this became known, Henry ungenerously seized the opportunity to press for the account of the moneys received from the vacant churches. The archbishop replied through the bishops, that being sick, he would answer next day.

At daybreak, on the Tuesday morning, several of the bishops came and urged him, for the peace of the Church as they said, and for avoiding a great scandal, to mitigate the rigour of his mind, and submit, in everything, to the king. They assured him that, if he did not, he would be accused of perjury and treason, for not having rendered earthly honour to his earthly lord; nor kept his oath of observing the ancient customs. “I confess,” replied the archbishop, “that I am inexcusable before God for having taken an oath against God. But as it is better to return to the soul than to perish, I do not admit a law which is repug-

nant to the law of God. David took an evil oath, but repented. Herod clung to his oath, and perished. So I enjoin you to reject what I reject, stifling those things that stifle holy Church." He then remonstrated with them on their uniting with the council in judging him; and, finally, appealed to Rome. Gilbert Foliot likewise appealed; and the bishops withdrew. St. Thomas then entered a church, although he had been told that death or captivity awaited him, and, wearing the pallium, celebrated the mass at an altar dedicated to St. Stephen, the protomartyr. Then putting aside the pallium, but clad in his vestments, he proceeded to the castle. Arriving at the hall of the castle, he dismounted from his horse, and took into his own hands the cross which had been borne before him. At his approach, the bishop of London, who was standing at the gateway, was thus suddenly addressed by the archdeacon of Lisieux: "My lord bishop of London, how is it that you suffer him to carry the cross himself?" "My good man," was the strange reply, "he was always a fool, and always will be." Without noticing, perhaps without hearing, this remark, the archbishop moved forward. The throng made way. He entered, and took his usual seat. The other bishops took theirs beside him.*

Some of the bishops appeared surprised at their primate's carrying his own cross. The bishop of Hereford begged to take it, whilst Foliot, the bishop of London, expressed his wish that the archbishop would give it to one of his clergy, saying that he seemed prepared to disturb the whole kingdom: "You hold the cross in your hands; if now the king should take his sword, behold the archbishop well prepared." "If it might be," returned the archbishop, "I would always make it my province to bear it in my own hands. But now I know what to do: yes, even for the peace of God, of my own person, and of the Church of the English."

Henry, meantime, had withdrawn to an inner

* FitzSteph. pp. 35—40; Chron. Gerv. pp. 1387—1392.

apartment. There he spoke in violent terms about the primate's arrival, thus armed with his cross. The bishops, leaving St. Thomas, now joined in the hot debate. It was at last concluded that he could be accused before the Holy See, and easily condemned and deposed. This was, therefore, to be their plan.

The archbishop, still holding the cross, remained in the hall. Among those that were sitting around him were John Planeta, Herbert, his lecturer on the Holy Scriptures, FitzStephen, who afterwards became one of his biographers, and Ralph de Diceto, the archdeacon and afterwards dean of London, famed for his learning, and for the Chronicles which he has left to posterity. Many knights, too, were in the hall; but the barons were in council with the king and the bishops.

Although royal marshals and other officials, with wands in their hands, stood by with extended fingers and threatening looks, forbidding any one even to speak to the archbishop, there was, nevertheless, a sort of broken conversation. Herbert advised him to excommunicate his enemies for their souls' sake, if they offered violence. FitzStephen opposed this, on the ground that it would seem to be revenge, and would be contrary to the example of the Apostles and martyrs. John and Ralph were full of emotion during these observations, and could not restrain their tears. FitzStephen, interrupted by a marshal when attempting to speak, was content with catching the archbishop's eye, and directing his attention to the image of Christ crucified, and making him a sign that he ought to pray. The archbishop obeyed. Many of the knights, meantime, as well as the clergy, uttered aloud encouraging words. One exclaimed: "O treacherous world! whose surface, like that of a tranquil sea, is sometimes calm, but has hidden storms within." Another cried out: "There is vicissitude in everything. No love of God. O honours of the world! in which even the things that are hoped for, are to be dreaded!"

A deputation of "earls and barons" from the king to the archbishop now entered. Its object was to ascertain the correctness of a statement made by the bishops. They had told Henry all St. Thomas's remarks regarding the late proceedings. They had been reproved, they stated, by the archbishop, for what he had termed their unjust decision in his regard: since for one case of absence, which ought not to have been pronounced an act of contumacy, they had doomed him to forfeit all his goods. A like captious judgment, he had added, in a like case, might befall the bishops and barons themselves. In London, moreover, it was the custom for those that were "condemned to the king's mercy," to pay one hundred pounds; and in Kent forty pounds. Now his see being in Kent, he ought to have been sentenced and fined according to the law of Kent. He had finished (the bishops continued) with citing them to appear before the Pope, to meet his appeal; and by authority of the Pope had forbidden them to judge him for the future upon any secular question regarding the time previous to his consecration. The king, on hearing what St. Thomas had said, sent the deputation above mentioned, to inquire from the archbishop himself, whether he had really mentioned the appeal and prohibition, although he was the king's liegeman, and although he had pledged himself to observe the Constitutions of Clarendon. The messengers were also to demand surety that he would give an account of his chancellorship and submit to the judgment of the council.

The archbishop had arisen at the approach of the barons; he now again sat down, and fixing his eyes upon the face of the crucifix, thus answered: "I owe the king allegiance, homage, obedience, for God's sake, in everything, saving the obedience due to God, the ecclesiastical dignity, and the episcopal honour due to my person. I have shunned the suit, because I was cited to the cause of John only; and therefore, in any other cause, am not bound to answer. I have

received from the king, I acknowledge, many dignities; but I have served him faithfully. I have, moreover, expended all my own income, and rejoice that I have incurred heavy debts in his service. But when I was chosen archbishop, before my consecration I was released by the king from all secular complaint, though now, in his anger, he disavows a fact which very 'many of you, and all the ecclesiastics of the kingdom, well know. I ask and implore you, who are conscious of the truth, to suggest this to my lord the king; against whom, although it is lawful, it is not safe to name witnesses.' Ever since my consecration, I have renounced honour; I have done what I could for the Church. If adversity has come upon me, I attribute it not to the king, or to any other, but chiefly to my own sins. God is able to increase grace to whom, and when, He will.

"With regard to giving surety, I cannot do so: the bishops have already stood bail for me. Nor ought I, since judgment has not been given, and I have not been cited to any cause but to that with John Marescal. With regard to what has been said concerning the prohibition and appeal, it is true: and still do I appeal; and both my own person and the church of Canterbury, I place under the protection of God and of our lord the Pope."

He ceased to speak, and the deputation began to withdraw in silence; but some of the barons, looking round as they went, said loud enough to be heard: "King William who conquered England, knew how to tame his clerics. He arrested his own brother Odo, the bishop of Bayeux, when a rebel against him. He condemned Stigand to perpetual imprisonment in a black well."*

* Gerv. p. 1392, Decem Script.; FitzSteph. pp. 40—44; Herb. de Bosh. p. 143, &c. So also Rad. de Diceto, who was then archdeacon of London, mentions, no less forcibly than FitzStephen, the archbishop's being liberated from all responsibility: "Ante consecrationem suam liber et absolutus fuisset ab omni ratiocinatione de voluntate regis et mandato."—(De Archiepisc. Cant. ap. Whart. ii. p. 689.) From Diceto's "Imagines," it seems that the saint was

Scarcely had the nobles disappeared, when the bishops issued forth by the king's command. One of them, Robert of Lincoln, was weeping, and some others could scarcely restrain their tears. Well might they weep with the noble constancy of St. Thomas before them, and the sting in their consciences of their own servile fear of earthly power. Hilary of Chichester, however, had no such redeeming weakness. He complained aloud that the archbishop had thrown the bishops into the utmost difficulties by the prohibition. If they disregarded it, they fell into disobedience; if they obeyed it, they would incur the king's displeasure: "for we promised at Clarendon, to observe the customs; you in the first place, and we by your command. We appeal from this grievance to the Pope."

"I hear what you say," replied St. Thomas; "I shall be present, with God's mercy, at the prosecution of the appeal. Whatever was conceded at Clarendon," he continued, "was done saving the honour of the Church: for as you yourself truly say, we laid down three limitations; in good faith, without evil guile, and lawfully. What is against the faith due to the Church, and against the laws of God, cannot be observed in good faith and lawfully. Moreover, a Christian king has no dignity where that ecclesiastical liberty perishes, which he has sworn to preserve. Again, my lord the king sent the customs to the Pope to be confirmed, and they were brought back condemned. Let us follow the example and teaching thus given, prepared to receive what the Roman Church receives, and to reject what it rejects. If we fell at Clarendon, for the flesh is weak, we ought now to resume courage, and in the power of the Holy Ghost to struggle against the old enemy, who has two objects in view; both that he who stands may fall, and that he who has fallen may not again rise. If we pledged our words to what is unjust, you know

freed from such claims by the king's son and justiciaries. They, of course, acted in the king's place, Henry being then in Normandy, and having afterwards made no reclamation.

that they who promise what is unlawful, are not by any kind of law bound to observe it." The bishops made no reply, but sat down opposite their primate, in profound silence, until again summoned into Henry's presence. After some time they returned in company with several barons, and the earl of Leicester began to read aloud the acts of the royal council at Clarendon. When he began, as if the archbishop were now convicted, Hilary of Chichester called out to the primate to hear his sentence. "Judgment," said the archbishop, rising and interrupting the earl, "is sentence given after trial. I have spoken nothing this day as if in process. I have been cited hither for no cause except for that of John, who has not tried it with me. For this, you cannot judge me. I am your father; but you are the chiefs of the palace, the lay powers, secular persons. I will not hear your sentence."

The barons had no alternative now but to withdraw. When they had gone, the archbishop, after a brief pause, rose, and carrying the cross, moved to the gate. All day it had been closely barred; but one of the attendants, seeing the porter's attention engaged in chastising a boy, seized the key and opened the gates. As he went out, "some one," following, bade him go forth "as a man perjured to his king;" another bade him "depart as a traitor, and take with him the judgment of the king." As he caught the word "traitor," the archbishop turned round, and with a stern countenance, exclaimed, that were it not against the priestly order, and were it permitted him, he would defend himself in arms against the charge. Very different was the scene without: the faithful people were thronging the streets, kneeling for the blessing of the holy archbishop.

When he reached his lodgings, FitzStephen exclaimed; "This day has indeed been a bitter one." "The last day," calmly remarked St. Thomas, "will be more bitter." From such an answer we may reasonably infer, that in the midst of so many trying

scenes, he had drawn food from what was passing, for deep reflection upon the terrors of the day of judgment. In body he had been present in the king's court; but in spirit he had been in that of the King of kings.

After having returned thanks to God in St. Andrew's Church, he partook of a late dinner, at which was read the "Tripartite History of the Persecution of Pope Liberius." In the course of the reading, occurred the text, "If they persecute you in one city, fly to another." St. Thomas, at these words, turned a significant glance to De Boseham, which the events of that night fully interpreted. A hymn having been sung, the archbishop sent the bishop of Rochester, the chaplain of the see of Canterbury, and the two whom he himself had consecrated, Robert of Hereford and Roger of Worcester, prelates whom he greatly loved, to ask the king's permission and a safe-conduct to return home. The king received them with a pleasant countenance; but deferred his answer to the following morning. A warning from some trustworthy men, made the archbishop determine to make his escape.

As darkness had now set in, he signified that he was going to watch in the church, and bade them prepare a couch there. This he had done once before, singing the litanies with his clergy. The latter, therefore, requested that they might again attend him in his vigil. His object, however, being to make his escape, he could not prudently intrust the secret to so great a number. He therefore declined to give them so much trouble, and having selected only two or three of their number, proceeded to the church. After having said a litany, all being still, except the rain, which was falling in torrents, he quitted the church, and hastened to the northern gate of the city. The watchers had not taken their places. The fugitives therefore rode hastily through it, amidst a deluge of rain.*

* FitzSteph. pp. 44—49.

He reached a friend's house in Lincoln on the second night after his departure. The third night he spent on a solitary spot, quite surrounded by waters, and there remained several days. Thus alternately concealing himself by day, or stealing forth chiefly by night to continue his journey, Brother Christian, as he styled himself, reached at last a crazy ship which his friends had hired for the occasion, and was safely landed at Gravelines, in Flanders. He was not yet, however, in safety. Henry had sent to the earl of Flanders to denounce him as a traitor. More to be feared than the earl of Flanders, was the earl's brother, the earl of Boulogne. This nobleman had sacrilegiously married an abbess, the daughter of King Stephen. St. Thomas, who was then only chancellor, had so strongly remonstrated as to earn his lasting enmity. Having, then, much to fear, he hurried on, on foot, along muddy wintry roads the whole day. When, at last, he was quite spent with the effort, the two priests, who were now his only companions, hired him, for one penny, a horse without a saddle, and with a hayband for a bridle. The archbishop mounted, and jogged on for two miles; but was glad to try his weary feet once more. He took up his abode, at last, in St. Bertin's monastery, in the town of St. Omer's; but in order to avoid the snares of the earl of Flanders, he was afterwards obliged to flee by night to Soissons. When, however, it became known who he was, the whole country was astir to relieve his wants and to do him honour. Before proceeding further, he received a command from the Pope to take time to recruit his strength, and to await a future summons.*

* De Boseh. pp. 142—150; Gerv. p. 1393, &c.; and Roger de Pont.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

RECEPTION OF HENRY'S MESSENGERS BY LOUIS OF FRANCE, AND
AFTERWARDS AT THE HOLY SEE—EXILE OF ALL THE RELATIONS
AND FRIENDS OF ST. THOMAS—ST. GILBERT OF SEMPRINGHAM—
THE GILBERTINES.

WHEN Henry learned that St. Thomas had fled, he despatched the saint's greatest adversaries, laymen and clerics, as well as bishops, to do all that craft and money could, to procure the deposition of the primate.

The sympathy for the archbishop, and the indignation against Henry, were so strongly marked in France that the bishops from Henry's court were obliged to travel in disguise, as if part of the earl of Arundel's retinue. They arrived at St. Omer's, while St. Thomas was still there, though, on ascertaining their arrival, he withdrew to a neighbouring hermitage, and thus escaped their notice. Pressing on, the deputies presented their master's letters to Louis of France, urging him to warn the saint from his land as a traitor to his king. When Louis caught the words "the archbishop that was," he asked, again and again, who had deposed him? "I am a king as well as himself," he added, "and yet I cannot depose the clerics of my kingdom. My lord the king, instead of thus harshly and direfully treating such a friend, his archbishop, and so high a personage, ought to have remembered that verse: 'Be ye angry and sin not.'" Repulsed by the French monarch, the baffled envoys hurried to Sens, where Pope Alexander III. was then residing. When his Holiness gave public audience, crowds were present from all parts of France and Burgundy. The envoys had already had a private audience with the Pope, and had demanded that the archbishop should be sent back to England, and tried by a legate

a latere. They now dwelt, although with no proofs, upon what they called the archbishop's rashness and well-known obstinacy; but were loud in their praises of Henry: he was a Catholic prince, a devoted son and benefactor to the Pope and the holy Roman Church; one who venerated ecclesiastics, and bestowed the churches of his kingdom according to God and without simony; and if now there was a coolness between him and the archbishop, it was not the king's fault. This panegyric was followed by a glowing picture of the wealth and power of Henry.

If, indeed, the Pope had fixed his heart on this world, or put his trust in its rulers, it was high time for him to conciliate Henry. The emperor of Germany had set up three antipopes one after another, and supported them with all the resources of his empire. Were Henry now to assist the emperor, a worldly politician might well dread the consequences. So far the words of the envoys were well directed. Alexander, however, had his heart fixed on the future life. He knew the promises of God to the Church; he knew, too, his own duty to the Church, and was to be neither seduced nor scared from the path of duty. He had already given proof of this by condemning the customs. When the envoys ceased their eulogiums, he merely remarked that it gave him pleasure to hear that the king was so great and so good.

Three or four of St. Thomas's clergy were present, sitting together at the feet of his Holiness. They now showed a desire to speak. The Pope, however, told them there was no need, since no charge was made against the archbishop.

Having nothing more to allege, the envoys were base enough to promise, that if the king were gratified, he would guarantee that the annual amount of the Peter-pence sent to the Roman Church should not be less than a thousand pounds. Finding their offers unheeded, they received the Pope's blessing, and departed, in company with a messenger from his Holiness.

When, journeying homewards, they reached the banks of a certain river, they saw a numerous retinue on the opposite side. They soon discovered that it was the archbishop's, numbering about three hundred horse. Perceiving that he was on his way to Sens, they sent one of the king's chaplains to see what kind of a reception he would have. It was such as must have increased their mortification : the greater part of the cardinals went out to meet him, and the Pope arose at his entrance, and, consoling him, embraced him with tears.

They hurried on at the news, and found the king at Marlborough. He immediately sent messengers to seize the lands and other property of the archbishop himself, of his church of Canterbury, and of all his clergy, and to expel from the country every one of his relations and servants, as well as all those that had given him but a night's lodging in his flight from Northampton. Old and young were driven forth. Mothers, with infants at the breast, were not spared. Great were their sufferings, and not a few of them died, apparently of hardship. As if the king thought to overwhelm St. Thomas with all the sorrows of this band of exiles, he exacted from each an oath to go direct to the archbishop. They did so ; but when their condition became known, the generosity of the French of all classes provided amply for their wants.

Amongst others that suffered for St. Thomas's sake was St. Gilbert, the parish priest of Sempringham, and the founder of the Gilbertines.

This great servant of God was the son of a rich Norman knight and of a Saxon lady. After a course of studies in France, he opened a school for boys and girls at Sempringham, his native place. He appeared there in the rich attire of his rank, but with such unaffected affability as to win all hearts.

His school became for exactness a sort of monastery. The boys were trained to speak, play, and study only at appointed times. Those who have witnessed what may be done even in these days, may imagine the

sweet and joyous spirit that reigned in the school of Sempringham.

When St. Gilbert thus addressed himself to the education of youth, he was not as yet a priest. His father now presented him to the two livings of Sempringham and Tirington. With some reluctance he acceded; but always gave the whole of the income of Tirington to the poor. Receiving priest's orders, he was offered the archdeaconry of Lincoln, an office full of wealth and honours. Thinking, however, that few could undertake its responsibilities without being ensnared by its temptations, he firmly refused it.

Not content with this renunciation, he began to think of giving all his goods to the poor, or to some perfect religious. While in this state of mind, some young women of his own parish of Sempringham had developed by degrees such a calling to a religious life, such a love of poverty, chastity, and retirement, that, after taking the advice of his bishop, Alexander of Lincoln, he built them a convent adjoining the north wall of his church of St. Andrew. This convent was, as usual, inclosed with a wall, the only opening being a door, always barred up, except by orders of the saint, and a window for the introduction of food and other necessities.* Through this opening necessities were furnished by poor girls hired for this service. That even this might not communicate to the nuns any of the spirit of the world, St. Gilbert, by the advice of prudent men, formed these servants into a body of lay sisters, wearing a habit, and observing a fixed rule. They were well tried by a year's probation before they were allowed to take a vow.

These lay sisters required for the heavier work the assistance of men. This suggested to the saint the idea of making his own house the dwelling of a body of lay brothers. His household was therefore gradually formed of young men, brought up under his own eyes from childhood, and selected from the class of agricultural labourers, or of men who had fled from their

* Ap. Dugd. vi. part 2, p. 947, &c. v. to viii. : 1846.

lords, and "whom the name of religion had emancipated;" and also of some of the poorest of outcasts and beggars. Knowing that God is no acceptor of persons, St. Gilbert infused his own spirit into these heterogeneous materials, and soon found a united ductile body, doing its own work efficiently, and giving universal edification. The new institute attracted so much attention, and drew upon St. Gilbert so many offers of land for establishing other houses of his order, that he knew not what to think: he feared to lose the spirit of poverty, but he feared no less to be wanting to the appointments of God. Some offers, therefore, he accepted. Intending, at the same time, to put all these foundations under the care of the Cistercians, he crossed the Channel, and going to one of their general chapters, he made known his desire. It happened that Pope Eugenius, who had himself been a Cistercian, was present. St. Bernard, likewise, the self-denying abbot of Clairvaux, was there, and with him, it appears, his friend St. Malachy the archbishop of Armagh.*

Before this illustrious assembly, the parish priest of Sempringham appeared, and stated his object. He was told that Cistercian monks could not preside over another order, and was entreated and commanded by Eugenius to continue the work which the grace of Christ had enabled him to begin.

Returning home as abbot, he determined to support his own efforts in the government of his nuns by the learning and virtues of others. He collected approved and studious priests, and formed them into a body of canons regular. The rule of the nuns was in great measure that of St. Benedict; the rule of the canons

* Through Malchus, St. Malachy's master, England repaid a portion of what it owed to Ireland. When St. Malachy perceived the deficiencies of his education, he put himself for several years under the direction of the Venerable Malchus, the bishop of Lismore, who had made his religious profession in the monastery of Winchester, and returning to Ireland when elected bishop, became remarkable, in the midst of a very wide-spread degeneracy, for his learning and holiness.—St. Bernard's Life of St. Malachy, c. 4.

was derived for the most part from that of St. Augustine. Their dwellings were, of course, apart. The church was the same for both; but was divided by a party wall, so that neither could see the other.

Having thus completed his order, and drawn up its rule, St. Gilbert received from Eugenius a ratification of what he had done, a ratification confirmed by Adrian and Alexander, the successors of Eugenius.

Always being himself a model for his religious, he never travelled alone, a lay brother and two canons being his constant companions. He wiled away the time of the journey, not in light conversations, but in singing psalms and hymns.

He always abstained from flesh, and during Lent and Advent never tasted even fish.

When St. Thomas's friends were suffering exile, St. Gilbert was falsely charged with having sent him assistance. A denial of the charge would, he thought, involve an acknowledgment that such assistance was criminal. He therefore cheerfully suffered imprisonment and the temporary suppression of his order, rather than seem to reflect in any way upon so good a cause. He survived St. Thomas many years, dying the death of the just, in 1190, at the patriarchal age of one hundred and six.*

* Dugdale, ut suprà.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ST. THOMAS AT SENS—REBUKED FOR HIS FIRST WEAKNESS—RESIGNS AND RECEIVES BACK HIS ARCHBISHOPRIC—HIS OCCUPATIONS IN THE ABBEY OF PONTIGNY—HIS LETTERS TO ENGLAND—HIS VISION—ALIENATION OF SOME OF ST. THOMAS'S FRIENDS—EX-COMMUNICATION OF THE BISHOPS OF SALISBURY AND LONDON—THE KING'S INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN OF SALISBURY AND DE BOSEHAM—THE CORONATION OF THE YOUNGER HENRY BY ROGER OF YORK, IN CONTEMPT OF THE RIGHTS OF CANTERBURY AND OF THE POPE'S INJUNCTION—ROGER OF HEREFORD'S BOLD LANGUAGE TO THE KING—ST. THOMAS REMONSTRATES WITH THE POPE—ENGLISH SYMPATHY FOR THE ARCHBISHOP—HENRY'S SUBMISSION—RETURN OF ST. THOMAS—COMPLAINT OF THE EXCOMMUNICATED BISHOPS—ST. THOMAS TREATED AS THE KING'S ENEMY.

A FEW days after his arrival at Sens, St. Thomas was called to a private meeting of the Pope and cardinals. Producing a copy of the customs, he exclaimed: "Behold what the king of England has enacted against the liberty of the Catholic Church. You will see whether it were in one's power to pass over such matter in silence without prejudice to the soul." The customs were then read article by article.

Moved even to tears, all present blessed God that he had reserved one to stand up in defence of his Church. Great, however, was the indignation of the Pope, when he now found, not as before from report, but from an authentic document, what the customs really were. He sharply rebuked even the archbishop for having, "in conjunction with his fellow-bishops, renounced his priesthood and enslaved the Church, by his assent to what were not customs, but tyrannical usurpations." As the archbishop confessed his fault, the Pope absolved him, pointed out the path which he should now follow, and concluded with words of kindness and consolation. St. Thomas then addressed

both the Pope and cardinals in the following words : “ My fathers and lords. Nowhere is it lawful for man to lie, and much less before God, and in your presence. Wherefore freely, but also with groaning, do I confess, that my unhappy fault has excited these troubles against the English Church. I went up into the fold of Christ, but not by the door itself, since I was invited by an election not at all canonical, but was thrust in by the terror of the public power ; and although I undertook this burthen against my will, nevertheless I was led to it by the will of man, and not of God. What wonder then if it has proved an affliction to me. If, however, at once, at the word and will of the prince, I renounced, as my brethren would have me, the privilege of episcopal authority which had been vouchsafed me, I should have left a pernicious example to the Catholic Church. I therefore deferred, until coming into your presence. But now acknowledging my entrance to have been uncanonical, and fearing that, in consequence, some worse result may befall me ; seeing, too, that my strength is unequal to the burden, and in order that I may not be found to have presided over my flock to its ruin, to which I was given, such as I am, for a shepherd, I resign, father, into your hand the archiepiscopate of Canterbury.” So saying, while all around were in tears, he took the ring from his finger, and placed it in the Pope’s hands.

As soon as the archbishop had seated himself apart, the Pope and cardinals consulted upon the question.

English gold had been lavishly employed to win a strong party among Romans of influence. Even some of the cardinals, and William of Pavia by name, are said by Roger de Pontiniaco, to have thus bartered their consciences.* Whether thus purchased or not, a considerable number of persons, cardinals and others, of “ great repute and learning, and deeply read in the

* “ *Cardinales tamen, qui, accepta a rege pecunia, partes ejus fovebant, præcipue Willelmus Papiensis, qui præ ceteris regi erat amicior et familiarior,*” &c.

Holy Scriptures,"—a class of men, according to De Boseham, that "usually abounds and flourishes" in the Roman court,—were of opinion, that in so critical a time St. Thomas ought to have remained at his post.* Those cardinals that were of this party, whether from conviction or interest, did not forget the king when they were seated in consistory. They said, therefore, that the resignation was a way opened to them both to appease Henry, and to provide for the necessities of the church of Canterbury. Others thought that if one who had exposed himself to the loss of wealth and fame, and life itself, for the liberty of the Church, were to be deprived of his right at the will of the king, other bishops would be deterred from a just resistance; and the Catholic Church would be shaken, and the Pope's authority be lost: the archbishop must therefore be restored, if he be ever so unwilling, and must in every way be supported.

In this latter opinion all now concurred. St. Thomas "being called," received back the charge of the church of Canterbury, and was promised the support of the Holy See. As he had left all things, he was committed to the hospitality of the abbot of Pontigny, who happened to be present. The abbey of Pontigny is in Burgundy. Its inmates were Cistercians. There, on the feast of St. Andrew, the archbishop took up an abode that lasted two years, living such a life of frugality and penance as became the Cistercian order, and as suited the exile of the soldier of Christ† (A.D. 1164). His time was occupied during the first part of the day in mass and meditation; and during the remainder, in the works of the field, such as reaping and haymaking, in which he joined the

* "A quibusdam cardinalium et plerisque de curia viris magnis et eruditis, qui in Scripturis multum poterant, talibus quippe curia abundare et florere consuevit," &c.—Herb. de Boseh. p. 181, ap. Giles.

† Gerv. p. 1394—1398; FitzSteph. pp. 49—52; Ep. iv. Sti. Thom. ap. Giles; De Boseh. pp. 166—183, &c.; Roger de Pont. pp. 144—154, ap. Giles.

monks, and other penitential exercises; and in the study of the Holy Scriptures, and of general literature. There was not in France a book of antiquity or grave authority which he did not cause to be transcribed for the library of his church of Canterbury.

In the letters which he frequently wrote to the bishops, he defended himself against the futile charges with which some of them were not ashamed to reproach him. "If all is confusion," he said, "let it not be imputed to my departure, but to its real cause, my persecution. You know the manner of my election, the assent of all that had a voice, the pressing letters with which the king and all of you petitioned the Pope to grant me the pallium. You now appeal against me: that appeal does not suspend my authority." He continually urged them to do their duty, and to beware of being the cause, by connivance or concealment, of the king's oppression of the church of Canterbury. He publicly condemned in writing the Customs of Clarendon, and freed all that had promised to keep them from their engagement, while he excommunicated all that occupied the possessions of the church of Canterbury. Greatly enraged at this, Henry sent word to the Cistercian abbots, when assembled in one of their general chapters, that he would expel all their brethren from their numerous houses in his dominions if they any longer gave shelter to the archbishop. The abbots informed St. Thomas; but left the matter to his own discretion. He thought it best to withdraw to Sens. As he rode along on his way to that town, it was remarked how silent and melancholy he was, being usually full of mirthful conversation. The abbot of Pontigny, who was present, begged to know the cause of his grief. The saint, at last, disclosed it under strict secrecy: in the previous night he dreamed that, in some church, four knights slew him, by smiting off the top of his head. He added that he thought this was a sign from God; that he thanked God for so glorious an end, but grieved for the desolation of his clerics and monks. He com-

municated the secret, a few days after, to his friend, the abbot of Clairvaux. Arriving now at Sens, he took up his residence at the monastery of St. Columba, and found a most liberal benefactor in Louis of France.*

Two years had now passed, since the archbishop had quitted England. The Pope had written repeatedly to Henry, first in the mildest terms, and then gradually with some rebuke, not unmixed with threats of what would follow. Finding his efforts fruitless, he gave permission to St. Thomas to proceed against his disobedient children; and, at the same time, to compensate him for the losses to which he had been subjected, he made him legate, and gave him the full primacy of England, with all the privileges enjoyed by Lanfranc, or St. Anselm, or any other archbishop of Canterbury from the days of St. Augustine. The archbishop of York could, therefore, no longer claim exemption from the jurisdiction of Canterbury.

Jocelin, the bishop of Salisbury, was the first against whom St. Thomas proceeded. Having incurred the king's displeasure, he had endeavoured to win back his favour by giving the deanery to John of Oxford, one of the royal chaplains. As the dean ought to have been elected with the consent of the canons, and as the Pope had forbidden him to confer that honour without such consent (some of the principal canons being in exile), St. Thomas, by authority of the Pope, excommunicated him. The same sentence fell upon the bishop of London, for a threefold disobedience; and upon John of Oxford himself, for communicating with Reginald of Cologne, a person excommunicated and a schismatic; and also upon Randulf de Broc and others, for having usurped the property of the see of Canterbury.†

* FitzSteph. pp. 52, 54, and 55; Ep. Sti. Thom. ad Papam; Ep. iv, lxxii, lxxiii, ap. Giles; Gerv. p. 1400, 1402; De Bosh. p. 243; Diceto's Imag. Twysden, p. 546.

† FitzSteph. pp. 55 and 56; Sti. Thom. Ep. v. ap. Giles. See also Twysden's Diceto, pp. 546, 547.

This sentence Henry begged the Pope to remit, promising peace. The Pope consented; and again bade the archbishop refrain. Finding himself deluded, however, he again "unclosed the mouth" of the archbishop. The enraged king stopped the Peterpence; and to prevent a sentence of interdict from being published, forbade any one to enter England, without the king's letters. The bishops, on their part, made appeals which they took care not to prosecute, and continued their functions. Several of them had now died; so that the king held six sees, besides Canterbury.

By the efforts of the Pope, and of the king and nobles of France, some fresh attempts were now made to accomplish a reconciliation. The king, at last, offered to renounce the Customs, if St. Thomas would resign his archbishopric. St. Thomas replied that the two matters were of very different weight, the Customs having been condemned by the Pope.

Then came a sore trial to an affectionate heart. The greatest friends of the saintly exile, and amongst them the archbishop of Sens and the king of France, urged upon him to say no more about the Customs: they were not the point at issue; they had been condemned. Henry's promises, they said, were such, that St. Thomas had nothing to do but to subject himself to Henry's will, in order that the king might seem to have prevailed, and all would be right. Yet why should the wrong cause be made to appear the right? Why, on the other hand, should one who knew well the treacherous character of Henry, allow himself to be deluded, and the triumph of justice to be retarded, or perhaps defeated; yielding to human respect, because it had the appearance of gratitude? St. Thomas was still firm: he consented, "saving the honour of God and the liberty of the Church." His friends urged him to omit the clause; and finding him resolute, rode away and left him. Many of his fellow-exiles, yearning for their country, now reproached him for being an obstacle to peace and

restitution. When, however, he pointed out to them that the real question at issue was the liberty of the Church, and that upon this vital point the king had said nothing, they assented, and condemned their former erroneous judgment.*

The king himself soon after visited Louis at Montmartre. The archbishop was again tried as before, and returned similar answers. Henry then offered to abide by the judgment of the French clergy, and of the university of Paris. This offer was certainly plausible; but if sentence were given in favour of the archbishop, his cause would be little the better, Henry having made no promise of restitution.

Louis and his nobles then begged that, at least, the dignitaries amongst the archbishop's clergy should be reinstated in their possessions. Henry so far yielded, as to give them leave to approach him. From what followed, it became evident that Louis and the archbishop of Sens had been too easy of belief, and that the archbishop's suspicions were well founded: in the king's mind, the point above all points was still the customs.

It was now the solemnity of Easter. The clergy of Canterbury were at the gates, coming for the half-promised restitution. They were admitted. The first that was called into the king's presence, was John of Salisbury, famous for his classical style and literary attainments. He petitioned for the restitution of his benefices; and promised to be "devoted, subject, and faithful to the king as to his earthly lord, saving his order." He was told that he was born on the king's lands, and brought up in wealth and honour from the good things of the king's land; as if, forsooth, the king were the creator of the land and its substance, and owed nothing to it himself, instead of being no more than its protector. The end of all this was, that John was required to swear to be faithful to the king "against the archbishop and all men, and to observe the customs, whatever the Pope or archbishop

* FitzSteph. pp. 56—59; Gerv. 1404—1406; De Bosh. 257—269.

might do." John declined: he had been educated, he said, on the substance of the church of Canterbury, and had sworn obedience to the Pope and archbishop; and was, therefore, bound to "receive what they received, and to reject what they rejected." He was commanded to withdraw.

Herbert de Boseham was next introduced. The king could not repress an exclamation, as he gazed upon his tall handsome form, not ill clad in his suit of green cloth of Auxerre, while his cloak, with its usual ornaments, was hanging, in the German fashion, from shoulder to ankle. Herbert made his reverence, and sat down. He not only declined the oath against the archbishop and in favour of the Customs, but spoke with honest freedom. He said that the archbishop was the only faithful man in the king's dominions: the man that allows the king to fall into error, and does not speak, is faithless, is perjured. With regard to the Customs, he expressed his astonishment that the king should have written them: "there are bad customs against the Church of God in France and in Germany, but they are not written."

"What are the bad customs in France?" inquired the king. "Those of excise and toll, which are exacted even from clerics and pilgrims; and that by which, on the death of a bishop, all the moveables of the house, even the doors and windows, are carried off for the king's profit." After some other conversation of the same frank character, Henry cried out: "Why does this son of a priest disturb my kingdom, and ruffle my peace?" "I do not, by any means," replied the undaunted cleric, "nor am I the son of a priest, since, although my father afterwards became a priest, I was not born in his priesthood: nor is any one the son of a king, unless a king were his father." "Whose ever son he is," exclaimed one of the assistant barons, "I would have given half my lands that he had been mine." This approbation evidently displeased the king. He remained silent. Then a few other words passed, and Herbert followed John of Salisbury.

If this were to continue, if the clergy, one after another, thus refused the oath, the king's defeat would be known to all Christendom. Another method was therefore adopted. Philip de Calva had been studying and teaching the Holy Scriptures at Tours for two years before St. Thomas's exile; and having then fallen sick, had been long absent from the archbishop. When he entered, the oaths were dispensed with, and he received a charter of restitution. As soon as Philip's case was adjusted, the king rose, and proceeded to other occupations.

As Henry had failed to procure the deposition, he now sought the translation, of the archbishop. Failing once more, and finding that the Pope, after fruitless exhortations, had left it to the discretion of St. Thomas whether to excommunicate him or not, he was fired with rage, and issued orders that every layman above twelve or fifteen years of age should take an oath to their respective sheriffs not to receive or carry the letters of the Pope or archbishop, and that the bearer of any such letters should be treated as an enemy of the crown and kingdom.*

A noble matron, FitzBaldwin of "Byervers," openly refused to obey, or to suffer her vassals to obey, the mandate; but of those bishops that were in England at the time, Roger of York was the only one that refused to permit such an oath.

This prelate showed less firmness when called upon by the king to crown his eldest son, Prince Henry. This office, as the archbishop of York well knew, belonged to the see of Canterbury. He had, moreover, been cautioned by the Holy See to respect the rights of that see, and on no account to crown the prince. The terms in which the Pope wrote to Roger, were the same as to St. Thomas. To the latter he had said: "Do not crown the king's son, nor suffer another to do so, until he has taken that oath which it has been the custom of his predecessors to take, to defend the Church of God; and until he frees every one from

* FitzSteph. pp. 59—62.

the observance of the Customs, and from the new oaths extorted of late from the English."

Such was the tenor of the Holy Father's letter, not only to Roger and St. Thomas, but to all the bishops. Roger, however, weakly yielded; and performed the coronation (June, 1170). The bishops, too, who were present, acted as servile barons, instead of shepherds of the flock: they actually administered to the new joint king of England, an oath to observe the Customs. They were, therefore, put under a suspension of all ecclesiastical functions; whilst two of their number, the bishops of London and Salisbury, being the most guilty, were put under the greater excommunication, as men to be shunned by all the faithful.*

Roger, the bishop of Worcester, was on the continent at the time of this coronation. Riding in company with the king soon after, he told Henry to his face that the coronation was unjust and contrary to God; and that if he had been present, it should not have taken place. Indignant at some false charge of treason with which Henry had reproached him, the bishop not only defended himself, but took the opportunity to tell some other truths equally unpalatable. He spoke of his own brothers, to whom the king, he said, had been grievously unjust, allowing one to become reduced to poverty, and depriving another of two hundred and forty knights' fiefs. "Thus are you accustomed to reward your friends and servants. You threaten to strip me of the benefices of my see; while, unjustly and to the peril of your soul, you hold the archbishopric, and six vacant sees, and many abbeys, using for secular purposes the alms of your fathers and the patrimony of Jesus Christ." As the bishop was a relative, Henry endured these hard, unmitigated truths with unwonted serenity. When, however, one of the knights in the company (they were all on horseback) began, in hopes of pleasing the king, to

* See the letters and bulls in Wilk. i. p. 458, &c. and Giles, 224; Gervase, p. 1412; Decem Script. FitzSteph. p. 62.

speak against the bishop, Henry vented all his wrath upon him, telling him he was more than half inclined to tear out his eyes.*

St. Thomas had now been five years in exile, and yet had laid no censure upon his chief persecutor, the king. He knew that some of his friends were imprisoned, some scourged, and that others had died of want. He knew that Henry exulted in his long impunity, as if it were a triumph; and St. Thomas feared that it might indeed prove a triumph over the Church by being made a precedent. "As often," thus he wrote to the Pope, "as I read of the zeal of Phinees, Elias, Matathias and his sons, as often as the fervour of the Apostles occurs to my mind, as often as I consider the deeds of the holy Fathers, who, in behalf of the Lord's house, opposed themselves as a wall to princes and powers, so often do I groan at my own danger, and fear the just condemnation of the miserable soul, of my soul I mean, on account of my unjust silence and unseasonable patience."†

In another epistle, ceasing to speak of his own conscience, he appealed to that of the Pope. John of Oxford, he told him, had manifestly imposed upon him; the excommunicated abbot of Canterbury still more; and thus the king obtained the delay which he desired, converting the revenues of the churches to his purposes, and patiently awaiting the death of one of his two opponents, St. Thomas or the Pope. A lamentable consequence, however, would follow: in future times, it would be no longer possible for the bishops, without the authority of the Apostolic See, to put the kingdom or its king or nobles under excommunication or interdict, no matter what might have been their crime. "And, indeed," continued the saint, with words that have proved prophetic, "in course of time, malice might become so strong from this example, that the Roman Pontiff himself may not find in the

* FitzSteph. pp. 62—64; Ep. ad Pap. 228, 249, ap. Giles; Gerv. pp. 1405—1412, passim.

† Ep. 12, ap. Giles.

whole kingdom a man willing or bold enough to obey him against the king or nobles."

"Listen not to what is whispered against me, but read the Customs, and you will plainly see the cause of our exile; you will plainly see how the king before our reclamation shut the mouths of those that appealed to you, hindered ecclesiastics from going to Rome, without finding sureties, smothered the rights of elections, and drew all trials, both ecclesiastical and secular, to the judgment of his own court.* Who for entreaty, money, or right could ever obtain justice against him from the Roman Church, either under you or your predecessors? The bishop of Exeter endeavoured, by appealing, and his see forfeited in punishment, but against all right, the church of Boseham. In the same manner, the bishop of Salisbury forfeited the castle of Devizes and other possessions of his church. Let not the present supporters of the king's policy say that the Customs were drawn up out of hatred of me: from the beginning of his reign, Henry has treated the liberties of the Church as if they were his inheritance. Was I archbishop when his father forbade the nuncios of Blessed Eugenius to enter his territories? Was I archbishop when he gave the church of Boseham to the bishop of Lisieux? What did the bishop of Chichester avail, when, in the king's court, notwithstanding the apostolical privileges which he recited, he was compelled, by order of the king and his curia, to give the kiss of peace to the abbot of Battle Abbey, though the abbot

* Even Gilbert Foliot, the bishop of London, who plainly acknowledged that there was no appeal against the Pope's commands, which obliged him to appear before St. Thomas in his capacity of legate, yet, for royal favour, hinted to Henry, that if there were anything in the legate's epistles contrary to the Customs, it would be enough for an appeal (condemned as the Customs were), and thus would be an opportunity for eluding the required act of submission. Even this unhappy courtly bishop could not help complaining that priests enjoyed less liberty than laymen, and that "very many clerics" throughout England were punished, not by ecclesiastical, but by royal judges, not for manifest delinquencies, but without confession or conviction.—See Epist. Gilb. Ep. Lond. No. 274, 275, ap. Giles.

had been excommunicated, and had not yet received absolution? This, most holy father, happened in the time of your predecessor and of ours.

“ I, indeed, might have enjoyed the riches and honours of the world; but being, though unworthy, and a most wretched sinner, called to the government of the Church, I preferred ‘to be an abject in the house of the Lord,’ and to endure exile and extreme misery rather than weaken ecclesiastical liberty, or prefer the traditions of men, especially as they are unjust, to the law of God. My days, I know well, are short, and if I be silent, the blood of the impious one will be required at my hands. We shall, in a little time, stand before the tribunal of Christ. By His majesty and fearful judgment, I entreat you, as my father and lord, and highest judge on earth, to show forth justice to the Church and to me against those that seek its destruction. Supported by the alms of the Most Christian king, I am too poor to send messengers to press my suit. May it please your majesty to untie my hands, and both to allow me, in case the king is still deaf to your admonitions, to exercise the power of my office against him and his land, and to will that this sentence be inviolably observed by all the bishops.” *

Still, however, the Pope was reluctant, and the archbishop was obliged to have patience. After some months more had worn away, the Pope saw that the sharper remedy was indeed the only resource. He wrote, therefore, to Henry, that forbearance there would be no longer; that his dominions should forthwith be put under an interdict, and the bishops under suspension and excommunication.†

Whether moved by this letter or by some other cause, Henry began, at last, to show a sudden desire for peace. He, perhaps, dreaded the growing sympathy for the archbishop, which many in England took no pains to conceal. When the royal justiciaries had

* Ep. 19, ap. Giles.

† Ep. 25 and 230.

attempted to proceed against some abbots and ecclesiastics for sending money to the illustrious exile, an alarming tumult was the immediate consequence. When, on another occasion, the king fined the bishop of Winchester and others for the same pretended crime, he found amongst them men who fearlessly told him, that being commanded to give alms even to enemies, they had done right in giving to the archbishop.

The king's desire for a reconciliation may have been caused both by the tone of the Holy See and of the people of England; or it may have been merely quickened by such a tone, being, as was currently reported, only indulged in as a ready means towards the seizure and imprisonment of the archbishop. At all events, his desire was made known, and was speedily gratified. A great meeting was held near Amboise: the Pope's nuncios, the king of France, with nearly all the nobles, as well as several bishops of his kingdom, and most of the bishops of Normandy, were there assembled. As soon as Henry saw the archbishop, he sprang forward from the crowd, and, bareheaded, addressed him in kind and eager words, as if nothing had ever disturbed their former intimacy. He consented to all the archbishop's wishes, promising full restitution. He declined, however, the usual kiss of peace. He had sworn in a fit of anger, he said, never to kiss him. The Pope dispensed him from his rash oath. Still he had an excuse: it could be given, and with a better grace, in his own dominions. The archbishop acquiesced. The agreement being completed, St. Thomas, with the king's consent, went to thank his late hosts for their generous hospitality.

In his conversation with Louis of France, he observed, "We are going to stake our heads." "So it seems to me," replied the king: "indeed, my lord archbishop, as the kiss of peace was refused you, believe me, you ought not to trust yourself to your king." "The will of God be done," was the answer. In the same manner, when he took leave of the

archbishop of Paris, he said, "I am going to England to die."

Henry was now growing impatient at the archbishop's absence. He sent a messenger to recall him, saying openly that his delay seemed suspicious. The archbishop promptly returned. He found the king at Tours, and afterwards had an interview with him at Amboise; but Henry, although now in his own dominions, still refused the kiss of reconciliation. "Go in peace," said Henry, as they parted, "I will follow: I shall see you at Rouen or in England, as soon as I can." "My lord," said the archbishop, "my mind tells me that I am thus parting from you as one whom you will see no more in this life." These words seem harmless enough; and therefore the king's rejoinder, "Do you consider me a traitor?" seems to show that he really had that in his conscience which report had whispered. The archbishop's only reply was, "Far be it from you, my lord;" and thus they parted.

Henry had promised to pay the archbishop's creditors; and they had been brought together for this express purpose. Henry, however, did nothing; and St. Thomas was indebted for the means of satisfying them to the generosity of the archbishop of Rouen, who gave him three hundred pounds of his own money.*

He now proceeded to Whitsand, in Flanders, under the safe guidance of the dean of Salisbury, and carrying a letter of peace from the elder to the younger Henry. He had received other letters from the Pope, one encouraging him to return boldly to his see, and the rest containing sentence of suspension against the archbishop of York and such other bishops as were present at the younger Henry's coronation, as well as sentence of excommunication against the bishops of London and Salisbury. St. Thomas sent a messenger with these letters, before he

* FitzSteph. pp. 64—71; Ep. Sti. Thom. 25, 26, ap. Giles.

himself embarked. The messenger found the archbishop of York and the bishop of London, either at Dover or Canterbury, preparing to cross the sea. He read the sentence publicly.

When now the archbishop was on the point of sailing from Whitsand, he was informed that his life would be taken if he went to Dover. He therefore ordered the ship to be directed to his own port of Sandwich. As soon as the archiepiscopal cross, erected according to custom on the prow of the ship, was descried from the shore, the people began to throng together, many falling upon their knees, and all crying aloud: "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord." Scarcely had he landed, when he was surrounded by the mailed warriors of Randulf de Broc and the sheriff of Kent. When accosted in the king's name by John, the dean of Salisbury, they reluctantly withdrew. During the parley, the inhabitants came down to the beach in arms, to defend and welcome their long-lost primate.

Great was the joy when it became known that the archbishop was on his way to Canterbury. The multitude that attended him was great; but it was continually increased by new accessions, parish after parish pouring in with procession, and cross, and priest, hailing the arrival of their father, and uniting in the universal shout of triumph and jubilation.

As they entered the gates, the clang of bells was mingling with the note of the trumpet; and as they entered the churches, they found them decorated with silken hangings and "costly vestments," and resounding with the mingled roar of bells, organs, and hymns.

His sermon in the chapter, it was remarked, was on the text: "We have not here a lasting habitation, but we look for a future." Messengers now came to him from the bishops of York, London, and Salisbury, complaining that they had been condemned, without being "cited, heard, or judged," and reproaching him for coming "in fire and flame," and "trampling upon

his fellow-bishops," endeavouring to make them "his footstool." St. Thomas replied that when the fault is manifest, there is no need of inquiry, but correction; that the sentence was not his, but the Pope's, who had sent a good war, to break an evil peace. Jerusalem, he said, overflowing with delights, and too indulgent to itself, thought it was enjoying peace; but the Lord, pitying it, wept over it, because the severity of Divine justice was impending over it, though hidden from its eyes. The bishops, he added, wished to extort from him absolution by the lay power. They thirsted for his blood: "would that they may drink it; and they will drink it."

The bishop of London seemed inclined to submit; but finally the archbishop of York, who, alluding to his wealth, used to say that he had a Pope and a king in his retinue, induced him to put away the thought, and accompany him to the king.*

St. Thomas, meantime, sent word to Henry the younger that he was about to visit him. On his way, he passed through Rochester, where the bishop and clergy received him with great honour. At London, the joy and festivity seemed greater than even that at Canterbury. Three miles from the city, he was met by the clergy and poor scholars, singing the *Te Deum*. When he approached Southwark, he was welcomed by a vast multitude of every age and condition.

The next day, Jocelin de Arundel, the queen's brother, waited upon him, and told him that the young Henry did not wish to see him, nor to allow him to go through the cities and towns of the realm; but to return to Canterbury, and not to quit it. The archbishop could not believe that the younger king had sent such a message. He asked Jocelin whether he had been cut off from the king's peace. The only answer which Jocelin deigned to give, was: "He has

* FitzSteph. pp. 71—74; Ep. Sti. Thom. 27, Giles; De Bosc. pp. 310—319; Diceto, p. 551.

sent you the message which I have delivered;" and with a countenance as haughty as his words, he left the room. At the door, he met a rich London citizen, and exclaimed: "What, have you too come to the king's enemy? Make haste back, I advise you." The citizen was not so easily disconcerted: he was ignorant, he said, of his being the king's enemy; but he had seen the king's letters of peace and restitution.

The queen's brother could not be totally ignorant of Henry's intentions. His words, "the king's enemy," taken by themselves even, could hardly have arisen from mistake. Coupled with other facts (to pass over Henry's own behaviour and words), they grow into something very like certainty. The king's officials, in several cases, had been allowed to collect and retain rents on church lands of Canterbury, and to eject those whom the archbishop had put in possession on his own property; again, as soon as the archbishop landed on his return, two archdeacons, one of Canterbury and the other of Poitou, who were of his own clergy, and owed their promotion to him, but were also devoted courtiers, had already reached Kent, with the intention of passing to the continent, when, hearing of his arrival, they turned back, and embarked at one of the ports of the West; and lastly, Randolph de Broc, one of the king's chief agents in sequestrating the property of the archbishopric, had, after St. Thomas's reconciliation, seized one of his ships laden with wine, and having slain a part of the crew, threw the rest into prison. Neither the king nor his officers had attempted to do justice in this matter, until urged by the remonstrances of the abbot of St. Alban's and the prior of Dover; even then, the king commanded only the restoration of the ship, as if, to say nothing of the insult to the archbishop, the loss of property and life were but a trifle. These and other such facts show what the king's friends thought of the reconciliation; and the last fact, when it came to Henry's

knowledge, as well as his non-performance of his promise of full restitution, show what he himself thought of it; and, combined with the ominous words "the king's enemy," make it more than probable that the report was but too true, that the reconciliation was feigned on Henry's part, and was only made to draw the archbishop completely into his power.*

* FitzSteph. pp. 68, and 74—76.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE EXCOMMUNICATED BISHOPS AT THE KING'S COURT—DEPARTURE OF FOUR BARONS FOR CANTERBURY—PETTY ANNOYANCES INFLICTED ON THE ARCHBISHOP—ARRIVAL OF THE BARONS AND THEIR ABETTORS—THE SCENE IN THE ARCHBISHOP'S REFECTORY—PROCESSION TO THE CATHEDRAL—MARTYRDOM OF ST. THOMAS—THE POPE ENTREATED BY PRINCES TO CHASTISE THE MURDERERS—THE LEGATE PETRILEONE RECEIVES HENRY'S RENUNCIATION OF SEVERAL CUSTOMS.

THE bishops of York, London, and Salisbury, meantime, instead of pleading for themselves at their only legitimate tribunal, the chair of St. Peter, were complaining to Henry of their sentence of excommunication, and were describing St. Thomas's attempted visit to the younger Henry as an ostentatious march, with a view to enter some of the royal fortresses. At this, the king broke into gestures and exclamations of excessive anger: "Miserable man that I am, I have not one of the ignoble and cowardly men whom I have nourished, that will avenge my many injuries."

At these words, four barons of his household, Reginald Fitzurse, William de Traci, Hugh de Moreville, and Richard Brito, hoping to gain the royal favour by taking vengeance upon the archbishop, left the court, and hurried by separate roads to Saltwood Castle, the residence of Randulf de Broc. The king, after their departure, complained to his barons that the archbishop had entered his land like a tyrant, suspending and excommunicating the bishops, disturbing the whole kingdom, and aiming at nothing less than depriving himself and his son of the royal diadem. The barons must have known enough of Henry's revolting propensity to falsehood, to doubt much of this statement; but some were eager to

flatter; and therefore, although none brought any charge forward, and the king himself had spoken only in vague terms, and the accused archbishop was absent, yet some one remarked, that he had heard of a Pope being slain for insupportable insolence (which was untrue); and another, the uncle of the excommunicated bishop of Salisbury, plainly said, that the only proper punishment was the gallows.

After this conversation, the king despatched some of his courtiers to watch the ports on both sides of the water, that the archbishop might have no means of escaping.*

The archbishop, meantime, spoke plainly of his own impending death; and prepared for it by more abundant charities and more earnest prayer. Indeed, the evident contempt with which he was treated by the king's officer, Randulf de Broc, and the impunity with which this official continued his insults, was enough to make even the more incredulous fear the worst. De Broc had, in the king's name, cited before him all the principal ecclesiastics and citizens that had lately gone forth to meet the archbishop. The ecclesiastics refused to appear. The citizens defended themselves like honest men, and were ordered to abide the king's pleasure. Besides these arbitrary acts, De Broc had hunted at pleasure in the woods of the archbishop, and seized his dogs, and inflicted other petty but constant annoyances. He was, at last, excommunicated.†

When he was joined by the four barons from Normandy, he called to his assistance, in the king's name, ten or twelve knights from the castles in the neighbourhood of Canterbury, and the whole party, entering the city, bade the inhabitants arm, and follow them on the king's business. Perceiving the surprise and hesitation that followed, they countermanded their order, and commanded them not to stir, whatever they saw or heard.

* FitzSteph. pp. 78 and 79; Gerv. 1414.

† FitzSteph. pp. 77 and 80.

Entering the palace, they found the archbishop and his clergy sitting at table. He saluted them as they entered, and one or two muttered some kind of an answer, but the rest were silent. When they had seated themselves amongst the monks and clerics, Fitzurse said that the king had sent them to demand that the bishops should be absolved, and that the archbishop should go to Winchester, to the young king, whom he had intended to uncrown, and make satisfaction by there submitting to the judgment of his court.

To do so, would be at once acknowledging two of the condemned customs; and at the same time yielding what St. Thomas had undergone six years of exile and persecution to destroy. He therefore, without hesitation, told them, that the sentence had been issued by the Pope, and could not be revoked by an inferior; that yet, with regard to his suffragans of London and Salisbury, he had in vain offered what he was still ready to do, to remove the excommunication, if they humbly asked it, and submitted to the judgment of the Church; that he did not wish that the younger Henry should be uncrowned or recrowned, but should enjoy his dignity; that if sentence had been issued against the archbishop of York, it was because he had usurped the privileges of the church of Canterbury, in direct disobedience to the Pope's letters; and that if sentence had been issued against the suffragans of the see of Canterbury, it was because they had tolerated such a usurpation of the rights of their mother-church.

The only reply of the knights was a torrent of threats, and a command to quit the country. "I wonder," said the collected archbishop, "that you make so much noise; you are aware that our lord the king received me on Magdalen's day to peace and favour, and that I entered the king's dominions bearing his own letters and safe-conduct."

"From whom do you hold the archbishopric?" cried Fitzurse. "The spirituals from God and our

lord the Pope, and the temporals and possessions from our lord the king," was the prompt answer. "Do you not acknowledge that you have the whole from the king?" "By no means," returned St. Thomas; "but we are to render to the king what are the king's, and to God what are God's."

Being silenced for the moment, their threats became greater in proportion as they had less to say; they gnashed their teeth in their fury, and still warned the archbishop to beware of what he was doing when excommunicating the king's ministers. "If any one," he replied, "shall presume to violate the institutes of the holy Roman See, or the rights of the Church of Christ, and will not come and make voluntary satisfaction, I will not spare him, whoever he may be, nor will I hesitate to strike the offender with the censure of the Church." The knights at these words started to their feet, and approaching more closely to the archbishop, exclaimed, "We warn you that you say this at the peril of your life."*

"In vain do you threaten me," was the calm reply: "if all the swords in England hung over my head, your terrors could not move me from observing justice to God and obedience to our lord the Pope. You will find my soul as ready for martyrdom as your swords are for blows. You will find me foot to foot in the battle of the Lord. Once I shrunk back, a cowardly priest: in the counsel and obedience of our lord the Pope, I returned to my post, and never again will I desert it. If I may discharge my episcopal duties in peace, it is well: if not, may the will of God be done in my regard. In addition to this, you know what tie there is between myself and you, which makes me wonder more that you dare to threaten the archbishop in his own house."

"Well do we dare," returned Fitzurse, "to threaten the archbishop, and to do more: let us go out." Clerics, knights, and attendants had come thronging in at the rumour of what was going on; and were

* Edw. Grim, 72.

numerous enough to overpower the intruders, were they so disposed. Fitzurse commanded them in the king's name to quit the archbishop. They did not move. Then he commanded them to keep the archbishop in safe custody. "I am easily kept," said St. Thomas, "I shall not go away." The four knights at last departed. As they approached their retinue at the gate, they made the hall resound with their military cries: "Arms! arms, men!"*

The monks and clergy around the archbishop understood what had been said in very different ways. Some thought nothing was to be feared: what had been said was only the empty threat of drunken men. Others thought that there was no doubt that they would accomplish their threat. Almost every sound that, meantime, smote upon their ears, was one of alarm. There were the hurried footsteps of their vassals flying down stairs to the cathedral, from the presence of the armed men in the hall; the sound of blows, by which they knew that De Broc, finding that the gate was now shut and barred, was opening himself and his comrades an entrance through the wall; and the tearful cry from the church of a multitude of both sexes lamenting the calamity that was evidently impending.

"My lord," said the monks, at last, "go into the church." "Not at all," said the archbishop, "do not fear." Some, however, seemed beside themselves with terror: they seized him, and notwithstanding his remonstrances, compelled him to rise, and go forward. "The monks are singing vespers," they

* Gervase and Edward Grim give one or two of the salient points of the conversation in nearly the same words as FitzStephen, or as one another. The other points related by each of these writers are, evidently, some which the other two either forgot, or did not think it to their purpose to insert. The same remark will apply to the many conferences between Henry or his deputies and the archbishop, before the return of the latter from his exile. It may, therefore, be easily understood, that some parts of the conversation may here be unavoidably inserted in the wrong place; this, however, would not affect the substance of such conversations.

said, "and you are going to hear only none and vespers; it will be the same thing." The archbishop consented; and ordered the cross to be borne in front. When now they had entered the cloisters, the monks wished to fasten the door by which they had entered. This, at all events, the archbishop would not tolerate. The procession moved on, the archbishop walking at a slow pace, but compelling all to keep before him. They entered the church, and began to move up the steps, on their way to the high altar. Seeing this, the monks in choir broke off the vesper chant, and hardly knowing what they were doing, ran, some joyfully and some in tears, to meet one whom they never expected to see again alive. He commanded them to retire, and not impede his suffering. He still moved on towards the high altar, and had ascended four steps, when the voice of Fitzurse was heard at the door of the cloister: "Now here, king's men, follow me." There he stood, clad in chain armour, with a naked sword in his hand. He was immediately joined by three others in the same hostile guise. Others, armed though not clad in mail, soon thronged around him.

Some persons, seeing them, closed the gates which led from the cloister to the church. The archbishop immediately turned round, and descending the steps, up which the procession had just moved, forbade the gates to be closed, saying: "It is not becoming to turn the church of Christ, the house of prayer, into a fortress. Allow those to enter the church of God that wish to enter. May the will of God be done."

The terror through which the clerics had compelled him to enter the church now redoubled: all his attendant clergy, except Robert the Canon, Fitz-Stephen, and Edward Grim, fled; some to the different altars, and the rest to various dark recesses. Had the archbishop been so disposed, he might easily have concealed himself; the entrance to the crypt was close at hand, and also the winding stairs that led to the rooms and galleries in the upper part of the church.

He had no such intention; and soon he had no longer the choice. His armed pursuers had rushed through the gate which he had forbidden to be closed. "Where is the traitor?" cried one; for the gloom of a mid-winter evening was already settling down. There was no answer. "Where is the archbishop?" cried another. "Here I am," said the archbishop, turning and again descending the steps, "not a traitor, but a priest of God."

On the north of the church, and to the right of St. Thomas, was a massive column, having on one side an altar of St. Benedict, and on the other an altar of our Blessed Lady. This column, it seems, although somewhat on the right hand, was almost between the saint and the cloister-door, through which the soldiers were rushing. The saint, having descended the steps, stood at its base, exclaiming just before he reached it, "I am ready to die for Him who redeemed me with His blood. And I wonder that in such a guise you have entered the church of God. What is your pleasure?" "That you absolve those whom you have excommunicated," said one. "No satisfaction having been made, I will not absolve them." "You must die," cried another, "you may live no longer."

"Far be it from me to fly on account of your swords. I am prepared to die for my Lord, that the Church may obtain liberty and peace in my blood; but by the authority of God, I forbid you in any way to touch any of my people, whether cleric or laic."

"Fly," cried one, striking him over the shoulders with the flat of his sword, "you are a dead man." He moved not, but merely exclaimed, "Reginald! Reginald! I have bestowed upon you many favours; will you now come against me in arms?" The ruffian exclaimed, "You shall know now," and De Tracy seized his pallium, as if to drag him from the church, whilst, on the other hand, the few clergy that remained held him back. "I will never go," said the archbishop, shaking the pallium from his grasp with so

strong a hand that the knight tottered and fell prone upon the earth: "you shall do here what you wish, and what has been commanded you. I, for my part, receive death in the name of the Lord; and I commend my soul and the cause of the Church to God, and to Blessed Mary, and the holy patrons of this church." Whilst he was thus speaking, and was bowing his head, and raising and closing his hands together, Reginald Fitzurse, fired with rage at his repulse, was stepping back; and seeing his companions close by, brandished his sword, and shouting, "Strike! strike!" dealt its full stroke upon the intrepid archbishop. Edward Grim interposed his arm. It was broken and nearly amputated, but the sword, still descending, struck the archbishop's head. Wiping off the blood, St. Thomas thanked God; and exclaimed, "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. To God, and to Holy Mary, and St. Denis, and the holy patrons of this church, I commend myself and the cause of the Church." A second blow, hurled with the utmost violence, struck him down upon his face. As he sunk beneath this stroke, he fell first upon his knees, stretching out his clasped hands towards the adjoining altar of St. Denis, and so bowing forward to the ground, remained as if prostrate in prayer. As he thus lay, Richard Brito dealt him so violent a blow, that the sword broke, partly against the pavement, and partly upon the martyr's head.

Then Hugh de Horsea, surnamed the "Evil Clerk," planting his foot upon the saint's neck, and seeing that the crown of the head was cut off, thrust in his sword's point and drew out the brains.

The moment seemed suited to the deed. Not only had darkness set in, but rain was heard descending in torrents, and lightning flashed through the solemn pile.

As if struck by what they had done, or by the sudden and unusual thunder-storm (it being mid-winter), the murderers skulked away in the gloom. As they went, they struck a French boy and severely

wounded him, for lamenting the death of his patron, the martyred archbishop. The first clear intimation of their departure was their shout in the cloister: "The king's, the king's knights." This was perhaps a signal to their confederates, who had, meantime, been plundering the archbishop's palace. When, at length, it was known that they were gone, the monks and clergy, the servants and the people, all in crowds, came with groans and lamentations to gaze upon the prostrate body. It was placed upon a bier, the head being covered up, and was deposited before the high altar. The lips were compressed, and the eyes closed as if in sleep; and upon his whole countenance beamed the well-known firmness and sweetness of the departed spirit. Brother Robert, the canon regular, who had been the saint's confessor, and his inseparable companion even at his death, showed all present the sackcloth and the religious habit, which, unknown to any but him, St. Thomas had worn beneath his episcopal robes.

The monks kept vigil all that night, but as the church had been desecrated, they recited in silence the usual commendation of a departed soul. In the morning, they were told that De Broc was coming to carry off the body. They, therefore, shut the cathedral gates, and buried it in haste; placing the remains in a new marble sarcophagus, and concealing this in the ground of the crypt, before the two altars there. Besides those belonging to the church, the abbot of Boxlea and the prior of Dover were the only spectators.

The place, however, could not long remain concealed: it was made known by repeated miracles. "We see miracles daily," writes Gervase, himself at that very time one of the monks of Canterbury. The fear of De Broc's tribunal, which still menaced all that spoke well of the archbishop, made the people only whisper, at first, what continually happened. In a few days, however, the cures became so evident and remarkable, that the voice of the whole

city testified to the fact; and whilst all England, noble and ignoble, seemed flocking on pilgrimage to the martyr's shrine, De Broc and his tribunal sunk into well-merited contempt.* The news, meantime, had reached the Holy See; and with it, letters from Henry denying any share in the deed; and letters, too, from various princes demanding justice against the murderers.

"Let the sword of St. Peter be laid bare for vengeance for the martyr of Canterbury, because his blood is crying out for the whole Church," wrote Louis of France, to Alexander III.

"Dogs, the familiars and domestics of the king's court, have made themselves the king's ministers, and the guilty have drunk the blood of the innocent. To you, therefore, the blood of the just one cries out, and demands vengeance," were the words of the count of Blois, to the same Pope.†

Alexander attributed some share in this termination of the contest, to his own slowness in listening to St. Thomas. He now confirmed his previous censures against the archbishop of York, and the bishops of London and Salisbury, and excommunicated the murderers, and all their advisers and abettors. The assassins, who had at first withdrawn to the north, finally went to Rome, and then to Jerusalem, on a pilgrimage of penance. The bishops, too, submitted, and likewise took an oath that they had not been, in any way, accessory to the martyr's death.

Henry took an oath to the same effect;‡ and promised that appeals to the Pope should be free; that the "customs" which he had introduced against

* FitzSteph. ap. Sparke, pp. 81—92, and ap. Giles, pp. 298—305; Ep. Pap. Alex. 266, ap. Giles; Edw. Grim, pp. 72—79, ap. Giles; Roger de Pont. 165, &c.; and Gerv. pp. 1414—1419.

† Wilk. i. 467 and 468.

‡ If Giraldus Cambrensis is to be believed, William de Tracy hastened immediately after the murder to Exeter, and declared to the bishop of that city, that he and his three companions had been forced by Henry to swear that they would make away with the archbishop.—De Vita Sex. Episcop. Coet. ap. Whart. ii. p. 427.

the liberties of the Church, should be annulled ; that all the possessions of the see of Canterbury should be given back to it ; and that all persons who had been exiled on account of St. Thomas, should be restored to their country and property.* His public penance at the tomb of the saint is too well known to need a repetition. About three years afterwards, when the Pope's legate, Petrileone, had come to England to arrange the affairs of the Church (A.D. 1176), Henry pledged himself in writing (although, as he asserted, it was against the advice of his chief men), that no clergyman should be tried before a lay tribunal, except for a transgression of the laws of the forest, or for lay service due for a lay fief ; that no see or abbey should be in the hands of the king more than a year, unless from some urgent and manifest necessity ; that the murderer of a clergyman, in addition to the usual punishment, should forfeit his inheritance, whether for himself or his family, for ever ; and, finally, that the clergy should not be forced to pass through the ordeal of battle.†

This was a formal renunciation of some of the most important of those " customs " which Henry had not

* Diceto's Imag. an. 1171—1172 ; Will. of Newb. lib. ii. c. 25.

† See the document in Diceto, an. 1176. Petrileone was very nearly abandoning the country without obtaining these concessions, being shocked at a tumult in the synod itself. Roger of York, having been ordained before the new archbishop of Canterbury, had claimed precedence, in virtue of the epistle of St. Gregory the Great. Unwisely endeavouring to take his place between the archbishop and the legate, he was the cause of an immediate struggle between some of the attendants, both lay and clerical ; and before order was re-established, he had the pleasure of hearing himself saluted as the betrayer of St. Thomas, and as one whose hands still smelt of blood. It required all the united entreaties of the king and bishops to induce the legate to remain and complete his office. In his subsequent appeal to Rome, Roger obtained his wish, and also that the see of York should not be subject " in any way " to that of Canterbury. The bishops of Scotland had endeavoured at this very time to obtain exemption from the jurisdiction of the see of York ; but were reminded that humility and obedience are the guardians of virtues, and were commanded to obey.—See the bulls in Wilkins, i. p. 481 ; Diceto, an. 1176 ; and Gerv. p. 1433.

already promised to abandon. If the privilege of clergy did not extend to hunting or to lay services, it was, perhaps, because such matters were obviously foreign to the ecclesiastical state, and if engaged in, were deserving, not of privilege, but of the usual legal punishment. That any see or abbey should be allowed to be held by the king at all, was an encroachment of recent growth. It was something, however, to be able to assign any limit, however objectionable, to the king's tenacious hold of such benefices.

CHAPTER XL.

THE NEW ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY—HIS CANON OF CELIBACY
—BULL OF CANONIZATION OF ST. THOMAS—PILGRIMS TO HIS
TOMB—SUBSEQUENT TRANSLATION OF HIS RELICS—ST. GODRIC—
THE VISIONS OF KETTEL.

THE cathedral in which the martyr's blood had been shed remained without mass or divine office for almost an entire year. The monks said the office in chapter, without any solemnity. The altars were stripped, and the crosses veiled, as in Holy Week. About the middle of this desolate period, letters from Henry and from the Pope's legate recommended that the affairs of the church of Canterbury should be forthwith arranged. The suffragans and the monks, therefore, assembled in the chapel of St. Catherine at Westminster; but the monks declared that it was their right to nominate freely and publicly, and to nominate one of their own body.

Great but fruitless were the efforts of Prior Odo to secure such an election: Richard, the prior of Dover, who had been one of their number, was indeed elected; but not without the concurrence of the bishops. His election was opposed by the younger Henry; but was finally ratified by the Holy See (April, 1174).* Amongst the synodal constitutions of Richard, there was one which marks an epoch in the discipline of the Church in England. That infringement of the law of celibacy which had arisen in the Danish wars, although repeatedly denounced and

* Benedict, *De Vita Hen. II.* an. 1175, Hearne's ed.; Wilk. *Conc. i.* p. 476; *Decem Script.* pp. 1425, 1429, &c. Diceto's account of this election differs from that of Gervase, unless it be supposed that the latter, who mentions the efforts of Odo in full detail, has omitted that which, if true, completely baffled those efforts.

punished, was so far tolerated under St. Anselm, that married priests were allowed to serve in remote country districts. This toleration was now abolished. No marriage of those who were in or above the grade of sub-deacon, was henceforth recognized : those within that grade who were already married, were to separate. Persons below that grade, if married, could not separate, unless to enter a religious order, and then only by mutual consent. No such married clerics, however, could hold a benefice.

On the day of Richard's election, the Pope's bull of the canonization of St. Thomas arrived. It spoke of the holy life and glorious death of the martyr, and especially of the innumerable miracles, not only spoken of by all the faithful, but attested by eye-witnesses before two cardinal legates, who had recently visited England. Among the suffragans who were listening to the bull, were some of the most determined opponents of the saint. What must have been their thoughts as they heard this encomium from the chair of St. Peter, and accompanied by such an announcement of innumerable public miracles as set upon them the seal of perfect authenticity? Was there any dissent, any surprise? Nothing of the kind, either then or afterwards. They received the bull of canonization with the "Te Deum;" and out of a feeling of shame and repentance, they added to the prayer sung at lauds, the following words: "Be propitious, O Lord, to our supplications, that we, who from our iniquity know ourselves to be guilty, may be delivered by the intercession of blessed Thomas, thy martyr and bishop."* Such an expression is, indeed, not unusual; but when uttered on such an occasion,

* Diceto, who has inserted in his history both the prayer and the Pope's bull, was not only contemporary, but, as dean of London, was probably, on this very occasion, either sitting in the synod as the representative of his chapter, or present amongst the clergy then attendant on Foliot, the bishop of London. Roger de Wendover, who was then probably in his boyhood, repeats Diceto's account, and gives the reason for the addition to the prayer: "Ut suum publice omnibus confiterentur errorem et iniquitatem," &c. (vol. ii. p. 371).

its application becomes as pointed as if the crime had been distinctly announced.

As months and years rolled by, the throng of pilgrims increased. Amongst those of the year 1179, was the king of France, dressed in penitential weeds, and accompanied by a band of his most illustrious nobles. Five years later, the earl of Flanders and the archbishop of Cologne were amongst the devout multitude.* The offerings laid at the martyr's tomb were almost innumerable. Pope Urban ordered them to be divided into four parts: one for the monks; another for the repairs of the church; another for the poor; and the remaining fourth for other good works at the archbishop's discretion.† On the 15th of July, 1220, the body of St. Thomas was translated from the noble crypt in which it had remained for about fifty years; and was placed behind the high altar, in a chest of silver and gold, wonderful for its workmanship, and resplendent with jewels.

The translation having been long proclaimed throughout Europe, great numbers both of clergy and laity, came from all parts to the festival. It was thought by persons present, that so great a multitude had never before met in any one place in England. The archbishop levied contributions on all his manors, preparing all things "with admirable charity and unbounded benevolence" for the expected company; and yet his ample stores proved quite inadequate for the triumphant throngs.‡

The same year that witnessed the martyrdom of St. Thomas, had witnessed the departure of another great saint to his rest. This was St. Godric, the recluse of Finchale. St. Godric was a poor uneducated countryman, who gave his whole heart to God. When a young man, he made repeated pilgrimages to the holy places at Rome and Jerusalem. As was generally the case in those ages, such pilgrimages were

* Diceto and Gervase.

† See Urb.'s Ep. ap. Diceto, an. 1186.

‡ Ann. Wav. an. 1220.

undertaken as laborious acts of penance. Prayer and recollection, at least at stated times each day, guarded him against that dissipation of thought, which enervates the soul of the heedless traveller. The places of refreshment or rest prepared by Catholic charity, the way-side chapels, and the monasteries, or, sometimes, the shelter provided by the priest of the hamlet, were sufficient for the refreshment of those who sought not comfort, but merely necessary repose, on this way of the cross.

Thus journeyed and prayed the saintly Godric, strengthening his spirit by deep meditations upon the life and passion of Christ and His saints. From the time of his first arrival on the banks of the Jordan, he seems to have always performed his pilgrimages barefoot. After these severe toils, he lived with his sister, on the rocky banks of the Wear. A little open space in the midst of dense woods, yielded its scanty harvest to his penitential labours. His sister died; but he himself continued, for many years, and even till death, his humble sojourn at Finchale, on the Wear. He appears to have written more than once to St. Thomas, and to have been one of those to whom the archbishop's martyrdom was previously revealed.

His spiritual necessities were, from time to time, ministered to by a monk from Durham. He was ever remarkable for his sparing and cautious use of speech: "swift to hear, but slow to speak." Poor as he was, his face beamed with dignity and majesty. Reaching an advanced old age, he became so decrepit as to be unable to rise. Lying thus on his rude couch, close to the altar of his little oratory, he limited each day all bodily nourishment, to a single draught of milk. Thus awaiting his call home from this place of pilgrimage, he received meantime, with a cheerful and unclouded mind, the visits of those that, like William of Newburgh, the historian, went to pay their respects to this humble but glorious servant of God. He died, at length, the death of the just.*

* Will. of Newb. l. ii. c. 20; Acta Sanct. May, tom. v. p. 70.

There was living, about the same time, another virtuous unlettered countryman, named Kettel, whose singular, but apparently well-authenticated, history deserves at least a passing remembrance. He was the servant of the priest of Farnham, in the province of York. The brief but wonderful account of this saint, is narrated by William of Newburgh, who was himself a contemporary, and lived in the same county, and who assures us that he collected it from men whose word could be relied upon. Kettel, he tells us, received the power of beholding the wicked spirits in their attempts to ensnare the souls of men. Some of these spirits the saint described as weak and dull; some as powerful and crafty; all as exulting if they could harm either soul or body. He saw them enter villages in troops; and then separate to go into the different houses. They sat by the drinkers in taverns, and even upon their shoulders. When the time came for certain prayers, which, even in such places, were not omitted, the tempters fled, but laid aside their terror, and returned, as soon as the drinking recommenced.

The holy name and the sign of the cross made them tremble. Once, when overpowered with toil, Kettel had retired to rest without arming himself with the holy sign, they seized upon him, and bound and gagged him. Then exulting that they had one in their power who had often warned others of their malicious designs, they went aside to deliberate upon what evil they could inflict upon their captive. In the midst of their consultation, a young man, fair and majestic, and glittering in arms, entered the room. He merely touched his battle-axe with the tip of his finger, and the slight ringing sound was enough for the demons: they instantly vanished. The angel, for such was the youthful warrior, released the trembling servant of God, and having admonished him to be more upon his guard, disappeared.*

* Will. of Newb. ii. 21.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS OBJECTS OF JEALOUSY, AND OCCASIONALLY OF SYSTEMATIC PERSECUTION—DEFENDED BY LANFRANC AND ALEXANDER II.—PLAN OF HENRY II.—DEATH OF RICHARD OF CANTERBURY—EFFORTS OF THE KING AND THE BISHOPS TO WREST FROM THE MONKS OF CANTERBURY THE ELECTION OF HIS SUCCESSOR.

ONE of the most gloomy of all the pages of England's ecclesiastical history, has now to be unfolded. If the spectacle of bishops assailing or helping to assail the freedom of the Church has already been more than once presented, its painful aspect was relieved by the heroism of the chiefs of the hierarchy. Now it is, unhappily, the reverse: we shall behold primates allied with the crown in beating down the canonical liberty and long-established rights of the monks of Canterbury. Had the unholy contest been won, it would have extended to all cathedral monks, and perhaps to the extirpation of the religious orders.

Persecution is the promised inheritance of "all that would live godly in Christ Jesus." Those that inflict it, often fancy "that they are doing a service to God." It is grievous indeed, that a Catholic should, sometimes, be thus persecuted, not by pagan or Jew, but by fellow-Catholics. Yet our Lord's betrayer was an Apostle; and His crucifiers the priests of His own chosen people. The servant is not above his master: we must not be surprised if our enemies are those of our own household, not only those connected with us by blood, but by the one true faith. Still more distressing is it, when such persecution arises from the mistakes or malice of those that bear the indelible character of the priesthood. Yet even in this, we have our consolation: "They sit in the chair of

Moses : according to their works do ye not, but according to what they tell you that do ye."

As early as the beginning of the seventh century, there were symptoms on some parts of the continent of a jealousy of the monks. At the close of a synod held at Rome, in 610, Pope St. Boniface IV. wrote an indignant epistle against the rash assertion, that because a monk is dead to the world, he is unfitted for the priestly dignity. St. Boniface pointed to the illustrious examples of St. Gregory the Great and St. Martin of Tours, as a sufficient refutation, and commanded such "wicked audacity" to be ever after repressed. St. Mellitus of Canterbury was present at this synod, and bore the letter to the newly converted English.* It was, no doubt, reverently obeyed in this island, the monks being ever held in high veneration, until the Danish invasion and the Norman conquest.

The latter unhappy period, the date of much evil to England, is the beginning of a systematic persecution of the monks. Some of those who owed their mitres to the influence of William the Conqueror, made a combined effort, in conjunction with the king and his nobles, to remove all monks from the cathedrals.† Their object, as they themselves in the course of the ensuing struggle avowed, was to prevent the monks from either electing or being elected bishops. The first attack was directed against the monks of Canterbury. This effort succeeding, the other monastic bodies would fall an easy prey. The effort, however, was not supported at first by the primates : Lanfranc, St. Anselm, and St. Thomas, were not the men to court the smiles of kings and courtiers by a policy

* See St. Bede's Hist. l. ii. sect. 99 ; and his minor works, edited by Stevenson, Appendix, p. 252, &c.

† " Reflect on the odium which certain malignant individuals have, at this time, cast upon the order of monks ; and on the great exertions which they make, in order, at least, to eradicate it from the episcopal sees," are the words of Eadmer when writing to the monks of Worcester on the election of a bishop.—Ead. Ep. ap. Whart. ii. p. 238.

both questionable and dangerous, to say nothing of its injustice.

Perceiving what was contemplated, Lanfranc firmly resisted the new faction; and dreading that after his death it would prosecute its scheme, he appealed to "the authority of the Roman and Apostolic See." The Holy See promptly responded.

We have heard, wrote Alexander II., that some of the clergy, assisted by "earthly power, that is by laymen," have endeavoured to expel the monks from St. Saviour's Church. To this unholy work, they have added another: under pretence of relaxation of rule, they have endeavoured to expel the monks from every episcopal see. Urged, therefore, by the zeal of God, we have ordered the privileges of churches to be scrutinized. We have found the decrees of St. Gregory, and of his fourth successor, Boniface, in favour of the monks. These we confirm, repeating against the disobedient the same anathema which they pronounced.*

The feeling thus smothered for a time was not altogether extinguished. Thus, in 1123, a vacancy having occurred in the see of Canterbury, the bishops, all of whom, remarks Simeon of Durham, had been of the secular clergy, protested that they would not allow a monk to become their primate. They were supported in their determination by the king; and the awe-stricken electors surrendered their freedom of choice. They however kept as near to it as possible: passing over both monks and seculars, they chose William, a canon regular.†

As years rolled by, the civil wars of Stephen, and St. Thomas's struggle against the "customs," more or less absorbed, for a time, all minor questions. Henry II., however, was but too faithful to the traditions of his grandfather. If his penance at the

* Wilk. Conc. i. p. 328; Ead. Hist. Nov. (Selden) pp. 10 and 11.

† Sim. Dunelm. De Gest. Reg. an. 1123. For William's refusal to be consecrated by Turstin, see *suprà*, p. 304.

martyr's tomb were, for the moment, sincere, it soon yielded to the dictates of an unchristian policy.* From a remarkable conversation, in 1196, between Hubert, the archbishop of Canterbury, and one of the monks whom he had but too bitterly afflicted, it appears that Henry had planned, what he certainly in part executed, a deliberate scheme to sow discord between the monks on the one hand and the bishops and secular clergy on the other; and, at the same time, to excite a spirit of jealousy and discontent against the Holy See.† The events that closed his reign, dating from the death of Richard of Canterbury, fully corroborate this statement.

Gervase, who does not seem to have been hostile to the memory of Richard of Canterbury, and who was a contemporary, gives the following account of his death. Richard was one night asleep in the archiepiscopal villa called Rotheham, when there appeared to him a person terrible and majestic, exclaiming, "Who art thou?" The question was repeated; but the archbishop was too terrified to speak. "Thou art," continued the apparition, "the man that has scattered the goods of that church which has been intrusted to thy keeping; and I will scatter thee from the earth." This said, the apparition vanished.

The archbishop (and no wonder) could sleep no more. Rising at the first dawn, he took the road to Rochester, where some affairs awaited his decision. On the way he narrated to the attendants that were

* He laid bare his shoulders to the strokes of the discipline, "according to the custom of public penitents," not only at Canterbury, but in a council previously held in his continental dominions. —Will. of Newb. l. ii. c. 25 and 35.

† See the conversation in Chron. Gerv. pp. 1594—1596, ap. Decem Script. Roger, who for twenty-eight years was the archbishop of York, was but too faithful an abettor of the king's designs against the religious. He was a careful, thriving man of business, as far, at least, as his temporalities were concerned; but, if William of Newburgh may be trusted, was less zealous for souls, and was a decided enemy of religious. He could find, he used to say, in Turstin, his predecessor, no greater fault than to have erected Fountains Abbey! —Will. of Newb. l. iii. c. 5, an. 1181.

riding with him, what he had seen in the night. Scarcely had he finished speaking, when he was seized with cold, horror, and sickness. He was carried into a neighbouring farm, belonging to the see of Rochester, and there, tormented with cholic and other diseases, he speedily breathed his last (Feb. 16, 1184). His body was immediately conveyed to Canterbury, and was buried in the chapel of Our Lady at Christchurch.*

Soon after, Randulf de Glanville, the king's justiciary, as well as the bishops of Norwich and Rochester, and others, arrived at Canterbury, and told the monks in chapter that it was the king's desire that they should proceed to the election of Richard's successor. Rejoicing at the gentle tone in which the message was conveyed, and at the king's declaration, that his only object in this was to please God and advance the interests of the Church, the monks immediately obeyed, and chose the abbot of Battle Abbey. Out of a superabundant wish to please Henry, they added three others; so that if the king were not pleased with one, he might be with another.

The good, simple-minded men were rather surprised at what followed: the king would not ratify the choice of any one of the four; and the prior, who had thought to learn better the king's wishes by going in person, returned to his brethren overwhelmed with insults and threats, which, however, were not unmingled with courtly flattery. A second audience, in obedience to a royal summons, ended in a second discomfiture; the prior was dubiously told "to pray in a different manner, and to take other counsel." Well might the monks begin to wonder, and to grow jealous of their freedom of election.

Henry, indeed, took no pains to conceal his purpose: he declared openly to the earl of Flanders, that the prior wished to be in England a second pope, creating, by an act of his own will, the archbishops of Canter-

* Gerv. p. 1465. Diceto agrees almost exactly with Gervase with regard to time and place, but says nothing about the vision.

bury. This was, of course, untrue, the prior being only the hand and tongue of the monastery. It was evident, on the other hand, that Henry was not very loath to be the second pope himself, no matter how repugnant to the spirit of that Church of which he professed to be an obedient child.

Again a king's messenger appears at Canterbury, citing the prior and several monks to Windsor. "Take pity on me, my lords and my friends," said the crafty, wilful monarch; "for you are my vassals and friends, almost all born on my land, on which account you are the more bound to me. I therefore ask you, by the faith which you owe me, to speak to my bishops, and, between you, to take such counsel that the honour of God and of Holy Church may be preserved, that my kingdom may continue in the enjoyment of peace, and that due honour may be reserved to me undiminished, which, in this matter, my predecessors are known to have enjoyed."

After this speech, redolent in almost every clause of the condemned customs and of state interference, the king spoke in similar terms to those whom he was pleased to call *his* bishops.

A meeting followed between the monks and bishops. Amongst the latter was Gilbert Foliot of London. He was now blind, and his very tongue seemed frozen with extreme age. He expressed great indignation at the claim which the prior had now reiterated, of the exclusive right of the monks to elect the archbishop. He produced a letter from the Pope,* enjoining the bishops of England and the prior and convent of Canterbury to proceed within two months to the election of the archbishop. Some debate followed, after which the bishops took up their old position, far exceeding the authority which they had just produced: it was their right, they said, to elect the metropolitan, and the right of the bishop of London, as dean, to nominate.

The king, meanwhile, was showing a zeal for peace

* See the letter in Diceto, p. 619; Decem Script.

that would have been laudable indeed, had it been sincere, and "according to knowledge." He induced the two parties to hold their deliberations apart, while he himself carried their replies from one to the other. He at last prevailed on the monks to make a written declaration, that the election about to take place, had been made by the bishops and monks, with the royal assent. Whilst the bishops seemed to demur to this, and the monks were again negotiating with them, they received a message from the bishops, that they had chosen Baldwin, the bishop of Worcester; and at the same moment the chanting of the *Te Deum*, swelling from a distance, caught their ears, and told that the forms of the election were thus completed.

The king, as if he were a mere impartial spectator, soothed the grief of the monks, and yet artfully endeavoured to win their consent to the election. The prior, however, notwithstanding Henry's usual mixture of threats, compliments, and reproaches, told him publicly, before his court, that he would not consent unless the king in person repaired to Canterbury, and with his own mouth "besought the good-will of the community;" and unless, after having obtained the consent of the monks, he should declare publicly before clergy and people in the chapter-house of Westminster, that the election just made in that same chapter-house, was not duly and becomingly made; and unless, moreover, the person who had been there elected should protest that it was only by means of the prior and convent, that he could and ought to undertake the charge of the church of Canterbury. Stringent as these terms may seem, the king, at last, assented.

In the course of a day or two, he went into the full chapter of the monks, and sat down as if he were one of them. "Behold, my lords," he said, "as you desired, we have come to you, as our most dear lords, to ask pardon for this matter, which has come to an evil termination. And know that I attest to you by God, that never was it my wish that you should lose the rights of your church." He then begged them to

agree to the late appointment; and, as he concluded, fell upon his knees and wept.

The prior now spoke; his words were succinct, but full: it was true that matters had come to an evil termination; but, out of reverence to the regal character, the community would assent to his request, entreating him to make what reparation he could for the past, and to protect the rights of their church, and the person elected, and themselves, in future.

Even now the simple-hearted prior knew little of the arts with which Henry accomplished his designs. He followed the king to London, and was sanguine enough to imagine that everything had been already arranged. He therefore claimed the fulfilment of Henry's promise. To his surprise, he found him distant and reserved. His courtiers, who were now around him, knew nothing of the manner in which he had elicited the convent's consent to the election; and it was soon evident that Henry had well calculated upon this; and concealing his self-humiliation in chapter, held up to public view the concession of the monks as the triumph of his personal influence. The prior, as bold as he was simple, could not understand this, and gave the monarch a rebuke. The king quietly replied that he could not fulfil what he had promised, nor cause the bishops so much confusion as to make their election utterly void. The prior was so overcome at this announcement that he fell into a swoon. Henry feared that he would die; and throwing water upon his face, told him that he was only joking, and would do all that he had promised, and more.

This time, his chief object, the election of Baldwin, being secure, he kept his word: all that the prior had demanded was done both by the king and the bishop of Worcester. The only drawback was the the king's parade of his own wishes and commands, as if all had sprung unbidden from his own breast. The prior thus closed the proceedings: "You who are here have heard with what dignity the church of Canterbury is adorned in the election of its pontiff. It is,

indeed, clear that the election which the bishops hastily made, is as if it had never been, because it was presumptuous, and worthy of being utterly annulled. We, therefore, in the name of the Holy Trinity, choose the venerable man, my lord Baldwin, the bishop of Worcester, as father and pastor of the church of Canterbury.”

Then rising, they led the archbishop elect into the church, and intoned the *Te Deum*. The bells, not only of Westminster, but of all London, told joyously that the election at last was closed (Dec. 16, 1184).*

* Gerv. pp. 1466—1474.

CHAPTER XLII.

NEW TRIALS OF THE MONKS OF CANTERBURY—THE CHURCH OF HACKINTON—DECISION OF THE POPE, AND DISOBEDIENCE OF AN ARCHBISHOP—THE CAUSE OF THE MONKS DELAYED BY THE DEATHS OF THEIR PRIOR AND OF TWO SUCCESSIVE LEGATES—MISERABLE DEATH OF HENRY.

It would appear from subsequent events, that the late election had been contrived for no other purpose than to humble the poor monks beneath the royal power. At all events, the archbishop took possession first of various farms from which they derived much of their support, and then of several churches which had been put into their custody for the maintenance of the poor. An appeal to Rome, of which the monks gave him proper notice, increased their misfortunes: more farms were seized, rents were intercepted, and servants of the monastery were expelled. As if repenting of this violence, but, more probably, from a crafty plan for securing a part, at least, of what he had seized, the archbishop made a promise of complete restitution. The monks, therefore, recalled their appeal, and recovered their farms, but not their rents. The churches likewise were withheld, and their revenues were alienated from the service of the poor. Baldwin had artfully sent to Rome, meantime, to obtain both a confirmation of the gift which he had made of the churches to certain clerics, and at the same time authority to build a new church. As all things seemed in due course, no appeal being made, he easily obtained his request.

The new church, however, was intended to be nothing less than a new cathedral. It was situated at Haketon or Hackinton, about a quarter of a mile to the north of Canterbury. Each of the suffragan

bishops, and the king too, it was said,* was to possess a stall, provided they would each find revenue for the prebend and his vicar. Baldwin himself had declared that the new edifice would be the "church of Canterbury." Was it, then, by this means that the bishops thought to secure to themselves the election of the future archbishops? At all events, it looked so suspicious, that the monks of Christchurch considered that this and their oppressive treatment was a sufficient ground for a new appeal to Rome.

Instead of acquiescing in the appeal, Baldwin suspended the prior from his administration and some of the monks from the altar, and drove one of the brethren altogether from the monastery. Pope Urban at first decided nothing regarding the appeal; but enjoined the archbishop to proclaim publicly, within ten days after receiving the command, that his sentence against the prior and monks was invalid. A similar letter was sent to the abbots of Faversham, St. Augustine's in Canterbury, and Battle, with the same command as to the archbishop, in case the latter should be disobedient.

The ten days passed, and nothing was done. The abbots, therefore, wrote to Baldwin to spare them the pain of doing what they had been commanded. His only reply was, that his fellow-bishops agreed with him that he had done everything reasonable. The three abbots, therefore, having no longer any alternative, declared publicly that the sentence was invalid, and made known their proceedings to the Pope.†

The archbishop seemed perfectly infatuated. So far from attending to the Pope's repeated letters, both requiring restitution of all that he had seized since receiving notice of the appeal, and enjoining him not

* A king was, in some countries, allowed to hold a stall, that is, to endow it, and to fill it with a competent clergyman of his own choice. Thus, in the previous century, the emperor St. Henry of Germany wished to be present at all the church offices; but this being sometimes impossible, he was allowed to endow a stall for a canon, as his own substitute.

† Gerv. pp. 1474—1494.

only to desist from the building, but also from collecting money for its purposes, he now pushed on the works, and ordered the new canons to erect their houses with all possible speed within the precincts of the rising church.

The messengers of the archbishop, meantime, made their tardy appearance at Rome. Peter of Blois was their chief spokesman. In the course of the proceedings, the Pope asked what necessity or utility there was that required a new cathedral. Peter replied that the archbishop needed greatly the aid of prudent men; and that the clergy were more prudent, more experienced in business, than the monks.

Well did the Pope know, that however useful worldly experience certainly is, it is not the chief requisite in the government of souls, and in the mixed spiritual and temporal matters included in that government: ecclesiastical knowledge, holiness, and that instinctive wisdom, not of this world, which God breathes into holy and simple hearts, are, undoubtedly, still more essential. He made no remark, however, on that point, but turned to the plain facts of the case. "Are not the monks canons of the cathedral?" he asked. "They are the cathedral canons, my lord," replied Peter. "If, then, they are canons, why does he not take the advice of his canons?" said Urban. Peter, with all his eloquence, had but little to say to this, and was soon reduced to silence.

The Pope, finally, wrote to Baldwin, commanding him not only to desist from building the church, but, at his own expense, to level it to the ground, together with the adjoining residences for the canons, and to make full restitution for every injury inflicted upon the monks since their appeal. The letter closed with a warning, that if he continued disobedient and rebellious, he should be deprived of the obedience and honour which he himself had hitherto enjoyed.

Henry, too, received a caution from the Holy See. He had commanded the monks to appear before him, and abide by his decision. They had so far complied

as to send their deputies to court; but they wisely persisted in their appeal. Urban, therefore, cautioned Henry, that if he would merit the intercession of blessed Thomas, "the new and glorious martyr," he must respect the privileges of the church of Canterbury; must do all in his power to recall the archbishop from his career of oppression; and, instead of impeding, must endeavour to aid the execution of the mandates of the Holy See.

The effect of the Pope's letters was soon visible. The king was all kindness to the monks. He acknowledged to them that the archbishop had no right to their manors; and pledged his kingly word (a pledge, indeed, often forfeited) that they should obtain full justice. The archbishop, too, as well as the clerics, had adopted a milder tone, and even spoke, at times, of a complete restitution. Yet, how uncertain are all human hopes! The unexpected news of Urban's death broke up all the impending arrangements; and Gregory, his successor, was Baldwin's especial friend.

The new Pope announced that the decisions of Urban during the last three months of his life were all to stand good, except those that regarded the church of Canterbury. Baldwin's exultation was evident.

The best friends of the monastery began now to despair. Even Herbert de Boseham, the cleric of St. Thomas, who had spoken so fearlessly before Henry's court, advised the monks to humble themselves before the archbishop, and submit to his will and decision. He urged the difficulty of the contest; depicted what he called the mutability of the Roman court, the favour of Gregory to Baldwin, the power of Henry, and his inveterate malice against the rights and liberties of the church of Canterbury.

Ever since the prior's departure upon the appeal, the stress of the battle had almost always fallen upon the sub-prior, who was both mild and resolute, and could not endure the timid counsels of such friends as De Boseham. "Granting, my lord and master," he exclaimed, "that our lord the Pope, our peculiar

refuge, is no more, that the king rises against us, that our father and pastor harasses us on every side, and afflicts us with hunger and thirst; granting that he were even to seize us, and thrust us into a dungeon, that he were actually to cut off our heads or hands; even so, God willing, we will not voluntarily damage our cause, or embarrass the church, or tarnish our glory with dishonour. For this is the justice of our cause; that we seek the liberty of the church to which we are bound by our vows, that we are striving to preserve what has been transmitted and confirmed by our fathers. Know, for certain, that no affliction, already past or yet to come, will be able to tear us from a design so just and salutary." De Boseham was greatly struck not only with these words, but with the evident unanimity of the convent. "If, then, it is so," he exclaimed, "you must either yield with shame, or stand manfully." "We have stood, by God's grace, until now," returned the sub-prior, "and will stand in this endurance until the Lord accomplishes the work." *

The real test of the monks' firmness was now to be applied (A.D. 1188). The bishop of Rochester, in obedience to Baldwin's commands, proceeded to Canterbury, attended by the new canons of Haketon, and by a body of soldiers. He obtained leave to enter the chapter, and spoke much of humility; but the monks knew well that fortitude can exist without injury to humility. He spoke, too, of the cessation of their usual hospitality, and required them to show him their treasures, and surrender to his care the seal of the community. They told him that, as the archbishop had seized their farms and rents, and, when required to give them back, had made it an indispensable condition of his restitution, that they should hold their farms of him—a thing unheard of, and against which they had appealed,—it was no wonder that in such utter poverty they could no longer exercise hospitality. Their chief treasures, they added, were relics, books,

* Gerv. pp. 1494—1514.

charters, privileges, and sacred vestments: to show these would be too shocking an example for other churches. The seal is under four keys, and has never been under the care of any but the monks, "nor shall it be in our time." However, as you say that the king will soon be at hand, we will speak to him. "If you will not take back your manors at the archbishop's pleasure," exclaimed one of the knights, "we, by the king's command, will take them, and everything else." The sub-prior renewed the appeal to the Holy See; and the bishop and his followers, after some time, withdrew.

That very day, although a Sunday, the invaders would have taken possession of the chapter-house, had not the monks excluded them by shutting the gates.

On the following Wednesday, two monks were sent to Wingham, about five miles from Canterbury, to pay their respects to the archbishop, who had just arrived. They were stopped by Baldwin's messengers and informed that they were excommunicated, but contrived, however, to see the archbishop, and to let him know that they again appealed.

A day or two after, on the octave of the Epiphany, William FitzNigel, a knight who was implicated in the death of St. Thomas, taking with him a party of soldiers, broke through the wall of the chapter-house, and took forcible possession. The monks, hearing that their inclosure had been violated, suspended the offices of the church, and stripped the altars. The acts of violence, however, continued. The servants of the monastery were ordered to swear, that if they saw any monk going out of the monastery, they would either seize him or give an alarm. Those that refused the oath were beaten, chained, and thrown into a dungeon. Day and night about five hundred soldiers, with drawn swords, were moving to and fro, keeping guard in the chapter-house and in the porch of the church, and at every outlet. All communication being thus cut off, and their stores having been seized, the community must have appeared utterly bereft of

hope : starvation or surrender seemed their only alternative.

They, however, confided in their heavenly Father, redoubling their prayers and fasts. Nor did they confide in vain : Gregory was called out of the world, and Baldwin, struck with consternation at the news, relaxed the rigour of this unprecedented blockade, and withdrew to London. Nor was this his only vexation : in a great council held at Northampton, when he publicly gave notice to the bishops and others that the sub-prior was excommunicated, the bishop of Bath immediately stood up, and declared that the monks of Canterbury were supported by the apostolical authority ; and that, until the question before the Holy See were decided, no archbishop could promulgate a sentence against them. Baldwin could make no reply.

He now again had recourse to the king ; and at once there began a new series of summonses to court, and browbeating and insult, with some mixture, occasionally, of treacherous flattery. When one deputation had been proof to every snare, the king ordered to court, by name, three of the oldest and most simple of the community. By a mercy of God, they were all three too sick to be able to leave the monastery.

A missive from the new Pope, Clement, was now suddenly and publicly put into the hands of Baldwin. It contained an order that the site of the new church was to be held as accursed and profane ; a peremptory injunction, under pain of "due coercion," to destroy the new buildings ; a declaration that all who had dared to celebrate there since the prohibition, were suspended both from office and benefice ; and an injunction, to restore the monks, in every way, to that state in which they were found before they made the appeal (Jan. 26, 1188). There was no mistaking the terms of such a message ; but what, however, was done ? Great numbers of workmen were drawn together around the buildings ; but, instead of pulling them down, they converted them into something like

a fortress, by surrounding them with a deep and wide fosse and erecting gates.

In March, a bull of excommunication against those that had broken into the chapter-house and all the plunderers of the monks, was published by the prior of Faversham, and by Faraminus, a secular priest. Once more, therefore, the cathedral was beautified, and hung with curtains and all its other ornaments; and the bells rang, and the people flocked in with tears of joy. It was the glorious feast of the Resurrection. One sign of mourning still reminded all that the trials of the monks were not yet concluded; the mass was sung, but the organ was silent.

The men that had been excommunicated were, for the most part, of too unholy a character to care for the punishment, as long as it was purely spiritual. As their sentence cut them off entirely from the faithful, commanding all to avoid them, they strove to inveigle some to dine with them, in order that they might be involved in the same sentence. The new canons, too, supported by injunctions from the king and archbishop, were busy with the parish priests of Canterbury, colouring everything as well as they could, and persuading the bewildered clergy that in the archbishop's diocese the Pope's sentence was not to be considered binding. The clergy ought to have remembered, that as they stood to their people as representatives of their bishop, holding their jurisdiction from their bishop, and might, for certain canonical faults, and especially for manifest disobedience, forfeit that jurisdiction, or have it, at least, suspended by the direct action of the bishop's power; so, the bishops themselves, in like manner, holding their jurisdiction from the Pope, might have it suspended, either entirely or partially, by some direct act of the apostolic power. Either through fear, however, or through perplexity of mind, some of the parish priests dared to re-echo from the pulpit the false assertions of the new canons.

Despite, however, of menacing soldiers and meddling canons and king, and, worst of all, of disobedient

archbishop and mistaken or servile preachers, many there were that could not find it in their consciences to hold intercourse with men so clearly excommunicated by the Holy See. By the royal command, some of these intrepid men were thrown into prison, and, whilst there shut up, they narrowly escaped being burned to death by a malicious scheme of those that were excommunicated.

The abbots who had pronounced the sentence which the archbishop had before neglected, the prior of Faversham, and Feraminus the priest, all felt the weight of royal and archiepiscopal resentment. Feraminus had the care of an hospital of poor leprous women. Everything belonging to him, and even the stores of food for the piteous objects under his charge, were swept away. As if this were not barbarous enough, it was forbidden, in the name of king and archbishop, to do so much for them as to reap their corn.*

The Pope, meantime, was by no means indifferent to their sufferings; but those whom God loves he chastises: the monks were to continue still in their fiery crucible. The prior, so long in banishment, died of a pestilence; and the bishop of Ostia, who was to go to England as legate, did not long survive. A second legate was despatched; but, weakened by excessive abstinence, his constitution sunk beneath the fatigues of his journey, and he died at Mortiers.

Great was the exultation of the convent's enemies; but the attention of all was now suddenly arrested (A.D. 1189). Richard, the eldest of the surviving sons of Henry, was again in arms against his father, and was actively supported by the young king of France. Henry and the archbishop, and many others, were compelled to hurry to Normandy; and all England speedily resounded with the rapid gathering of mail-clad men. Long conferences between the two kings led to no result, except to show that Henry's vigour and spirit were waning fast. The war was

* Gerv. pp. 1514—1532.

rekindled. Henry was obliged to flee from Le Mans, which his enemies gave to the flames. From castle to castle he still retreated, and still his enemies were close upon his traces. He obtained peace by submitting to terms, and especially by a heavy payment both to Philip and his barons.

When he was now at Azay bitterly meditating upon his reverse of fortune, some monks from Canterbury craved an audience. He reviled them as traitors; and bade them be gone, that he might "converse with true men." "May the Almighty Lord," exclaimed one of the monks, as they hastened away, "of his ineffable mercy, and through the merits of blessed Thomas, the martyr, if his life or passion pleased him, do us immediate justice in thy person."

Immediate justice was, indeed, rendered, whether in answer to that terrible prayer, or to the strong cry of Henry's sins; sins innumerable, of filthiness, of avarice, of wrath, of oppression. This king, so greatly envied by his neighbours, had no peace on his own hearth. His own queen, enraged at his infidelities, reared up his sons to rebellion. Two of them had perished in early manhood; the third triumphed over his parent; but the fourth, the youngest and most favoured, John, the lord of Ireland, stung that parent to death by ingratitude: his name, seen by Henry amongst the list of rebellious confederates, sunk into the monarch's heart and withered all its remaining strength.

He died seven days after he had expelled the monks from his presence. As soon as he ceased to breathe, his courtiers left him; and his inferior attendants stripped and plundered his poor remains. He was buried at Fontevraud.

CHAPTER XLIII.

RICHARD I. ASSUMES THE OFFICE OF ARBITRATOR BETWEEN THE ARCHBISHOP AND THE CANTERBURY MONKS—BLOCKADE OF THE MONASTERY—THE KING'S BREACH OF PROMISE—COMPULSORY SUBMISSION OF THE MONKS—DEATH OF THE ARCHBISHOP—THE MONKS VINDICATE THEIR RIGHTS—SENTENCE OF THE HOLY SEE—DEMOLITION OF HACKINTON CHURCH—THE KING'S RANSOM.

Soon after Henry's death, the archbishop returned to England, while a legate, who had now arrived from the Holy See, was detained, by royal authority, in Normandy. Three trusty monks went to greet the archbishop on his landing, and to inquire how he wished to have the procession arranged.

He replied that he received the greeting of the community, but not that of the sub-prior, whom he still denounced as excommunicated, and required to come forth and submit publicly to his sentence. The answer of the monks was, that they did not consider him as excommunicated; that the whole community was unanimous; that, if the lowest amongst them were set apart, there would be no procession by the rest. They concluded by entreating him, through the mercy of God, in the name of the whole monastery, to fulfil the commands of the Holy See. Baldwin said that he had; and exclaimed: "I will go to my church; I will appoint my prior; and I will make my chamberlain, my sacristan, and my cellarer."

To add to their affliction, Richard, the new king, seemed resolved to force the monks to a compromise, telling them, by letter, not to confide in the legate, since he should not enter the kingdom "to destroy our land." Such was the irreverent language of one who professed to be engaging in the crusade for love of holy Church. Richard, the darling of romance,

was, in sober truth, a wayward, headstrong man, at one time generous, at another ruthless and tyrannical; enslaved, in a word, to all the fierce passions of his father. Beginning his career in rebellion, he continued it in strife, and died the victim of an ignoble contest with his own vassal. It is scarcely to be wondered at that such a man knew little, and perhaps cared less, about ecclesiastical government.

He commanded twelve monks to come into his presence and make peace.

When they had assembled at Westminster, in the chapel of the infirmary, the archbishop attempted to expel one of the most eloquent of the number, under pretence of his being excommunicated. The monk reminded him that that sentence was suspended by the Pope. After various efforts, Baldwin found it necessary to abandon the point.

Full of the impetuosity of inexperienced youth, Richard would scarcely afford time for any searching examination. He heard the claims of the monks. He heard those of the archbishop; being the appointment of certain officials, the custody of the seal and treasure, and, in short, submission to his orders. He heard, too, with pleasure, an assertion of the bishop of Rochester which savoured more of a heathen than a Christian: "The treasure of the church is yours; nor ought it to be removed without your cognizance." The treasure given by the faithful for the support of Christ's clergy and poor, and for the repairs and beauty of God's house, were thus declared by a bishop to belong to the king! Who does not know what belonging to a king means? Richard knew well enough; and, therefore, replied at once to the bishop's remark: "It is true it is our treasure for the defence of the land against foreign enemies." He then demanded whether both parties were ready to submit to his arbitration, and to that of "the bishops and wise men of the kingdom." The archbishop, at once, assented. The monks, too, assented, "saving their charters and privileges."

Richard was now hungry, and the October sun was declining; he broke up the meeting till the morrow, and hurried to dinner.

On the following day, the king, after some conversation, observed, that the old charters might be confirmed; but that the new privileges, those given in the time of Archbishop Richard, were to be overlooked, as the latter was himself a Canterbury monk. The religious urged that this was a strong reason for confirming what he had done, since he was well acquainted with the ancient rights of the church of Canterbury: and the reason was the "stronger," they added, "because he was canonically elected and canonically consecrated by Pope Alexander, and sent back to England as apostolic legate: unless, perchance, which God forbid, those were of less authority whom the Roman Church promoted."

Evening was now again drawing on, when the aged bishop of Durham asked the monks reasonably enough, unless he knew what was to follow, whether they would allow the charters of Richard's time to be inspected, in order that what was reasonable might stand, and what was not so might fall. Whether the monks had not brought the charters, or suspected some artifice, or felt that they could not, without disobedience, exceed their instructions, they begged for a brief respite, that they might consult their brethren. The king, however, broke in upon them with the exclamation: "I will not do it. I will not wait for you any longer. Call a notary," he continued, "to write down the names of the judges whom I shall appoint." Some immediately said that each party should choose its own. This the king would not hear of. He appointed forthwith five bishops and two bishops elect, with several abbots and priors.

When asked whether they consented, the monks said they did, "saving our charters and privileges." As they had been dragged into this arbitration by the royal power, they were wise to keep firm to a clause which reserved to them the full right of recovering, in

better times, what just judges would pronounce to be rightly theirs.

Richard endeavoured to cut away this clause, at least as far as "the new" charters and privileges were concerned. Seeing this, one of the monks asked that, if all the charters could not be saved, at least a just sentence according to the tenor of the remaining charters and privileges, should be pronounced. Even if the king had a right to meddle at all in these matters, he could act justly only by giving sentence according to such recorded right. It was too evident, however, that the absolute will of the king and archbishop, and not simple justice, were to preside in the arbitration. Richard displayed excessive indignation at the request; and stood again and again pointing angrily with his finger to the monk, while listening to something which Baldwin was whispering in his ear. Hugh, the bishop of Chester, was not ashamed to exclaim aloud: "Heigho! Have I not spoken to you about monks? If you would agree with me, in a little time not one would remain in England. Monks? 'ad diabolos!'"

The Church has to lead souls to Christ by teaching and helping them to imitate Him and His saints. Those are its truest sons who strive most exactly to do this; who look not merely to what they are commanded, but, with generous self-sacrifice, to what is only of counsel. Amongst the foremost of such obedient, devoted sons stand those monks that fervently practise the rule of their institute. Therefore is their rule approved by Popes and councils. Not that all monks are what they should be. What class of men is there, alas! in which all its constituent members are what they should be? Enough that the existence of monastic rule is recognized, approved, and tenderly watched over by the Church. What, then, is to be thought of any one, bishop, priest, or layman, who dares to open his mouth against them as a body? He opens his mouth not against them only, but against the Church.

What a miserable spectacle to behold the watchers on the battlements of Jerusalem silent and throwing aside their arms, nay, doing their utmost to tear down their own walls, merely because "the kings of the earth stood up, and the princes assembled together against the Lord and against His Christ!" The archbishop, and the bulk of the clerical attendants who were present, joined in the insulting language of the unworthy bishop of Chester. Some few were silent from compassion; but none dared to raise his voice for the oppressed.

The poor monks were standing half-stupified, while the chief men present were making gestures with their limbs, as if threatening them with torture. One of the monks suddenly, as if beside himself, cried out, "Produce your customs and charters, and let us do the same, and then judge." With a loud laugh, it was asked whether the others would consent. Another, of greater age and prudence, saw the danger of yielding thus far, and asked leave to confer apart. After some hesitation, consent was given. They all now saw that to leave themselves thus unreservedly to the will of such judges, would be to endanger everything; their determination, therefore, was simply to ask leave to consult their brethren. "By the throat of God," exclaimed the furious king; "not one foot shall remain of you in the Church." "Please God," returned an indignant monk, "all would remain in the Church." "You are going back," exclaimed the king; "but not so shall you escape. I will see where you enter, and I will follow you ankle-deep." So saying, he sprang to his feet and left the room.

The monks, too, went out, followed by a storm of threats and reproaches. Robert, the earl of Leicester, now met them. He had not been present; but hearing what had taken place, he said to them with a deep sigh: "In that trust which is God, I give you this counsel from my heart: Cast your care upon the Lord; he will nourish you: all things ought to be abandoned for God and the liberty of His Church."

Another baron, happening likewise to meet them, said: "Never may you have part in heaven, if, by your own will, you let slip the liberties of your charters." Others, in the same way but secretly, encouraged the trembling religious.*

A body of men-at-arms, meantime, were despatched in such haste to Canterbury, that they rode all night. They established a close blockade. Woe to any one that attempted to carry food to the monks, or that breathed a word in their favour. Stripes, chains, a dungeon, awaited him.

The monks, returning from the conference at Westminster, were now close to Canterbury. They knew what the convent was suffering; they heard that the community was to be supplanted by secular clergy; but, nothing daunted, they applied for admission in order to share the perils of their brethren, and were allowed to enter.

Royal officials and the archbishop's clerics came soon after, with the intention of seizing the monks, or compelling them to submit. The community thought it better to submit for a time than to be completely dispersed. If, indeed, they were dispersed, their charters would probably be carried off; and they would perhaps never obtain their rights. If for a time they yielded, and thus preserved their proofs of right, the battle of just liberty might yet be won. Such appears to have been their reasoning: such, at all events, was their determination. When they made it known, the guards were withdrawn, and a great council summoned. Richard, the queen-mother, the king of Scotland, and his brother David, and a vast multitude of bishops and clergy, barons and knights, and people of every degree, assembled accordingly at Canterbury.

The monks promised that if the new church were demolished and the prior whom Baldwin had endeavoured to intrude upon them were deposed, and the charters and privileges of the convent were inspected,

* Gerv. pp. 1532—1557.

they would, with regard to their various other grievances, abide by the "arbitration" of the king and the bishops. Richard not only agreed that this should be done; but promised it, even if the archbishop should not consent, on his royal word, "at the peril of his pilgrimage," and as he prayed "God to give him earthly honour." The archbishop, however, did refuse, and Richard yielded to his refusal: "Put not your trust in princes." Had Richard's failure to crush Saladin, his captivity on his return, and his violent death, nothing to do with these matters?

When sentence had been read, allowing Baldwin the right of building the church where he pleased, and appointing the prior, one of the monks attempted to make some remonstrance upon the two points which had been especially guaranteed. He was interrupted by the king, who, with outstretched arm and hand, bade him be silent.

The monks, finally, knelt in obedience to Richard's order, and asked the archbishop's pardon for any offence which they might have given, adding, however, a supplication that he would preserve the rights of the church whether already granted or to be granted in future times. The kiss of peace was given, and proceedings closed.

Everything in the monastery resumed its former aspect. Three monks who had been thrown into prison for zeal for their liberties, were restored to the community. One of them, however, was so reduced from hunger, cold, and the annoyance of his fetters, that he expired, on the third day after his return, a martyr to justice and ecclesiastical liberty. Baldwin, on his part, abandoned the idea of a cathedral church at Hackinton; but resolved to put his plan in execution on some ground which he had obtained at Lambeth. The canons at Hackinton, therefore, had pulled down their houses, and taken the materials to Lambeth, leaving the condemned and solitary church untouched. Having, in conjunction with a few of the monks, appointed a prior, the archbishop, soon after, took the

scrip and staff of a pilgrim, and embarked for the Holy Land.* He never returned. In a few months, letters came from Richard, certifying that the archbishop was dead, and requesting that the archbishop of Montreal in Sicily should be chosen.

The bishops and barons of England, on the receipt of this intelligence, assembled at Northampton. The monks of Canterbury, too, were there, and were pressed to comply with the king's wishes. The wishes of such men, when repeatedly complied with, become commands, and a refusal is then treated as a breach of right: they should often be declined, if liberty is to be preserved. The monks seemed aware of this, and therefore besought, and with much difficulty obtained, a brief delay. They afterwards seized an opportunity for a free election, to choose the bishop of Bath; and he dying before his consecration, they chose Hubert of Salisbury, who was duly enthroned.

Adopting the advice of some of the bishops and other friends of the monastery, they, meantime, ejected three of the brethren, who had been false to the common cause. Then, turning to Osbern, the prior appointed by the archbishop, they told him that as he, too, had deserted their cause, he must be their prior no longer. He reminded them in how many of their afflictions he had shared; and stating that, if they had let him know that he was acting against their wishes, he would never have accepted the office, he at once resigned it, and withdrew from chapter. They compelled Walter, the sub-prior, to accept the vacant office. Celestine, the Pope, was meantime meditating their complete deliverance. John of Anagni, a legate whom he had sent to their help, had arrived at Dover in time to assist at the assembly at Canterbury. This would not have suited the designs of the government; and John was therefore detained in the port until his presence was no longer of any service. He at least remonstrated, and carried back to Rome a faithful account of the sufferings of the

* Gerv. pp. 1557—1561.

monks. Celestine was moved, and quickly despatched three trusty messengers to England. One of his letters commanded the bishop of Bath, and the abbots of Waltham and Reading, to enforce the restoration, on the one hand, of the monks of Canterbury to all their rights and possessions, and the total destruction, on the other, of the church at Hackinton.

The "rectors" of that church were therefore summoned to show cause why the sentence should not be published and executed. The parties met on the appointed day, and on the desecrated spot itself. The clergy and people of Canterbury were eager spectators.

No reclamation was attempted. The bishop and abbots, therefore, pronounced sentence according to the commands of the Holy See, declaring the place "accursed and profane," and commanding the destruction of the building. At once the people rushed upon the church; some here, some there, all resolutely smiting, overturning, undermining. In a short time, some heaps of rubbish, in minutest fragments, were all that remained to mark the scene of St. Peter's anathema (July 21).

In his letter to the monks, Celestine invalidated all the archbishop's proceedings against them, and forewarned every future invader of their rights, thus fully confirmed in his bull, that he "would incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul."*

King Richard, meantime, had earned a world-wide reputation for valour on the one hand, and for savage haughtiness and violence on the other. Exciting general disgust, he was abandoned by nearly all his fellow-crusaders; and his feats of arms could win no more than a precarious truce. Returning home in disguise, he fell into the hands of his enemies, and was detained a close prisoner. Such an indignity to one who had perilled his life for the Holy Land made men

* Gerv. pp. 1564—1574.

forget his faults, and raised a universal feeling of execration against his captors.

England, meantime, was ransacked for the levying of his ransom of one hundred thousand marks. The laity were taxed, and the clergy still more. Yet it was not sufficient. The treasuries of churches and abbeys were rifled; and the precious metals and jewels were removed from crosses and reliquaries. When the collectors entered the vast Cistercian abbeys, the pride of the country, in their massive, imposing architecture, they found neither gold nor silver. They were equally disappointed in other monasteries. Not to go away with their hands empty, they compelled the poor inmates to give them all that year's produce of wool* (A.D. 1193).

* Ann. Wav. an. 1193; Roger de Wend. vol. iii. p. 73.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE LAMBETH CHURCH—HUBERT'S DISOBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SEE—INNOCENT'S DECISION, AND DESTRUCTION OF THE LAMBETH CHURCH—DEATH OF RICHARD—RESTORATION OF THE MONASTIC PROPERTY—FINAL ARRANGEMENTS—DEATH OF HUGH NONANT, THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD AND COVENTRY.

HUBERT, the new archbishop of Canterbury, submitted to become the chief justiciary, or judge and governor of England. In this office he displayed great vigour ; but his character as archbishop seemed almost lost in that of the king's minister. He speedily became towards the monks the same scourge in the hands of Richard, which Baldwin had been in those of both Richard and Henry. When Celestine had heard that, although the church at Hackinton had been destroyed, another was in course of erection at Lambeth for the very same purpose, he ordered the canons to cease from celebrating there, and freed them from the oath of observance which they had taken to Baldwin.

Hubert, however, continued the works, although with slowness and hesitation. For some time he endeavoured to gain over the monks, and proposed that the new prebendaries should take an oath before they could be installed, that they would never interfere in the election of the archbishops. The monks, however, had learned how fatal all previous compromises had been : they declined, but, at the same time, entreated Hubert to fulfil the Pope's commands. Seeing how their brethren were importuned, and fearing the arts of Hubert, two of the monks stole away from the monastery, and, travelling in great poverty, reached Rome soon after Innocent the Third's accession, Celestine being now dead.

In answer to their complaints, the new Pope, who

had himself been an eye-witness of their former trials, wrote a strong epistle to Hubert, and to each of his suffragans, commanding the archbishop, not only to dismiss the canons, but at his own expense, and within thirty days, to destroy the new church itself.*

Forgetting that "obedience is better than sacrifice," the archbishop took no other notice of the letter than to fix a day for the reply of the monks (so he said) to the Pope's letter. He did not forget to inform the king. He took an opportunity, too, both to invite all the prelates of England and France to be present at the consecration of the bishop of Coventry, and, at the same time, to pour out his complaints against the monks.

Proceedings opened, as usual, with protestations of the zeal and good intentions displayed in the erection of Lambeth Church, and of the injury inflicted upon Hubert by letters procured without his knowledge from Rome.

Previous to the time fixed for the monks to appear, the abbots of Chertsey, Reading, Waltham, and Faversham presented themselves before the chapter. They came, "not as messengers sent by the archbishop" (though this very negative suggests a doubt), "but as special friends of the church of Canterbury." If they were true friends, they would have dissuaded from any share, direct or indirect, in disobedience; they would have urged the monks to become, if necessary, an anathema for their brethren,—to fight the battle of liberty to the death, not for that of a nation, but for that of the Church, the spouse of the Crucified One.

The abbots took their places in the chapter, wearing the dress that spoke of contempt of the world, yet having in their hearts the fear of the world, and having on their lips the wisdom of the world, which is "foolishness with God." They advised the community to beware; to look to the security of the Church; and not at once to confound the archbishop, and to bring

* Gerv. Chron. pp. 1588—1602.

destruction upon themselves. They knew, they said, certain secret facts, which made them exceedingly anxious and terrified. The plan, then, which they proposed was, that the church should, indeed, be destroyed, but that it should be done as if by arbitration, and by the concurring judgment of all, and not as if the archbishop were compelled to do so by the severe mandate of the Pope. This could easily be done, if the monks asked for repeated delays, and so deferred, as if by their own choice, the execution of the Pope's letter. In other words, they were to give the greater scandal of appearing to slight St. Peter's chair, in order to prevent both the lesser, and indeed imaginary, scandal of Hubert's appearing to have been in the wrong, as well as the wholesome and edifying spectacle of simple cheerful obedience to his lawful superior.

While the monks were deliberating, FitzPeter, FitzBardulf, and many other powerful laymen entered the chapter, and dared to tell the monks, on the part of Richard, not "to do anything against his crown and kingdom;" or, as they more clearly added, "not to use those decisions which they had evidently obtained against the dignity of the king and kingdom."

They then handed to the prior a letter from Richard, stamped with his own imperious and overbearing character. "We cannot sufficiently wonder," it began—"indeed, we are moved and troubled beyond what can be believed, about those things which we have just heard—yes, which we know,—to wit, that some of your monks, going lately to the Roman court, have, by concealing the truth and even suggesting what is false, fraudulently obtained from our lord the Pope letters directed to the archbishop of Canterbury to destroy the church at Lambeth." The letter proceeded to charge the monks with infringing an ancient "custom" and "right" of the kingdom, by which a bishop or layman could build and endow "a conventual church on his own land." "For," it continued (with a strange disregard to truth), "the translation of the

church from Hackinton to Lambeth had our own sanction, that of very many bishops, and ‘afterwards of the Roman pontiffs.’ ” It concluded with warning the community, as they valued their possessions and privileges, to desist from “this rash presumption ;” with requiring the chief of the monks to appear before him, and make competent satisfaction for the injury done to himself and his kingdom ; and with informing any one that might attempt to execute the command, that Richard had appealed, and renewed his appeal.

A copy of this letter was sent to all the English bishops. The archbishop was ordered (probably at his own request) not to touch the church at Lambeth ; and the other justiciaries were to repel him in arms if he attempted. If the monks would not submit to the king’s mandate, the archbishop and the other justiciaries were to seize their possessions.

The monks were long pressed, both by pretended friends and secret enemies, to yield. Their reply was, that they could not make a compromise without the Pope’s knowledge ; that they had no power to prolong the assigned term. Hubert therefore seized their possessions, and then urged the king to force them to a compromise. Then, again, receiving letter after letter from the different cardinals pressing him to fulfil the Pope’s injunction, he so far relented as to restore the property of the convent.

The Pope, as well as the cardinals, wrote also to Richard, to exhort him to preserve and defend the rights of the monks, and both to admonish him that they could not suffer, and to urge him not to suffer, a work to be continued, which tended to the subversion of the noble church of Canterbury. Richard remained obstinate. When two monks presented themselves before him to soothe down his animosity, they were received with menace and insult. A royal mandate was soon after delivered to the chapter, requiring its deputies to appear before the king, and assist in making some kind of compromise, by means of five bishops and five abbots. The monks had not forgotten

the compromise into which they had been betrayed at the end of their contest with Baldwin. They wrote thus to Richard:—"But, most dear lord, how could we dare or be able to recall this cause from the Roman curia, and place it under the arbitration of bishops and abbots, as sentence has been given in this question by four popes; since it is not lawful for any one in your land, without your consent and will, to draw any pleading from your curia to an inferior curia?"*

To this Richard could make no reply. He had recourse to other stratagems.

The suffragans of the church of Canterbury had already written a long epistle to Innocent, narrating step by step most of the proceedings regarding the church at Hackinton, as well as that at Lambeth. They mentioned the permission obtained from Urban III. to erect a church at Hackinton, but suppressed the fact of Baldwin's having exceeded the permission, by erecting, not a chapel, but a church with prebends. They referred, cursorily, to the same Urban's condemnation of the church; but they asserted, contrary to the very substance and object of the condemnation, that, as the former concession was not mentioned, it remained valid. They dwelt upon the indult of Pope Gregory VIII., suspending the decision of his predecessor Urban. Then, omitting all mention of the sentence of condemnation issued twice by Clement III., their letter hurried on to the compromise which closed the contest with Baldwin. They stated that by this compromise the monks had agreed that the archbishop might, without any future reclamation, freely build in any more distant place. This consent of the monks, if even it were free, could not bind the hands of their superior, the Pope, nor release Baldwin from the obligations of obedience. Omitting the condemnation issued by St. Celestine III., as well as his confirmation of all the rights of the monks, the letter closed in the same partial strain, and with what might appear

* Gerv. pp. 1602—1610.

a well-timed hint of what was called the vehement indignation of the king and barons.

This letter was supported by one from the Cistercian abbots of all England. The ground on which these good, but too simple "White Monks" were supporting the king and archbishop was, as the tenor of their letter shows, because they thought that the monks of Canterbury had been disobedient to their superior; and that such an example, if not corrected, would be (as, if it were indeed disobedience, it undoubtedly would be) of pernicious consequence to all religious communities.

While these letters, as well as one from the king, were on their way to Rome, the royal justiciaries, together with Hubert, who, by command of Innocent III., had now resigned his office, demanded permission to take an inventory of the treasures of the monastery. It was a thing before unheard of; and the monks remonstrated. Hubert replied, that the sight of their treasures would be sufficient; but the monks were firm in their refusal. Their possessions were, therefore, again confiscated. The monks remained firm, notwithstanding; and their prior went in person to Rome. The confiscated property was again restored.

At Rome, meantime, Innocent III., a pope of the utmost zeal and prudence, was listening in consistory, first, for nearly a whole day, to Hubert's messengers; then, on the following day, to two monks in defence, the prior not having as yet arrived; and again, on the third day, to the replies of Hubert's messengers. After mature deliberation, the Pope drew up a long, temperate, and most able instrument, embodying, first, point by point, the defence of the archbishop, then, in the same manner, that of the monks, and closing, at last, with a repetition of the sentence against the clerics and the church of Lambeth, and with a command to the suffragans of Canterbury to withdraw their obedience from Hubert, if, by exceeding the prescribed term of thirty days, he should presume to

disobey his own superior, the Pope. If Hubert proved thus disobedient, Innocent significantly remarked that, although, as God was his witness, he spoke thus not from indignation, but, indeed, only from his office of justice, yet, "if wounds remained insensible to fomentations, they must be cut away by the knife." * This letter, and a corresponding one addressed to Richard, were read in presence of the king and archbishop; and a council was held to deliberate upon the message. In a few days the church of Lambeth shared the fate of that of Hackinton (Jan. 27th, 1199). The canons were dispersed.

Innocent, meantime, had given audience to the prior. Astonished at the new spoliation of the church of Canterbury, he wrote to Richard to entreat and admonish him, for the remission of his sins, to restore the monks to their ancient condition, and to warn him that obedience to the Apostolic See would be enforced without regard to persons. Innocent wrote, at the same time, a letter both of condolence and congratulation to the monks, the "religious and prudent men" who had esteemed "all things as dross, that they might gain Christ."

When the prior returned with these letters, the possessions of the monks had already been restored. He thought himself bound, however, to present the letters. Richard's ungovernable temper seems to have been fired by the just menace of the Vicar of Christ. At all events, without so much as a cause being assigned, the possessions of the monks were once more confiscated. They applied to the archbishop, but were repelled with contumely. One of their number now crossed the sea, to appeal to Richard in person. He arrived only in time to witness the judgment of God upon the oppressor.

Richard had made a truce with Philip; and having destroyed the vines and orchards of some of his own barons who had revolted, and put many to the sword

* Gerv. pp. 1610—1622; Roger de Wend. an. 1198, p. 129.

in cold blood, was now besieging one of the castles of the Count d'Angoulême, and had refused even life to the terrified garrison, when he was struck on the shoulder by a bolt discharged at random. On the eleventh day after, this tyrannical sovereign died, smiting his breast, and declaring, "with grief, on the word of a king, that he would never, unless he had been instigated, have injured the church of Canterbury." The messenger from the monastery returned to his brethren, and all its property, except its money, was restored by Fitz-Peter, the justiciary.*

After this arrangement, Hubert contrived to win the affections of the monks. Flattery too often disarms the strongest will. Hubert was in the habit of praising the monks wherever he went: and, whatever other effect this might have had, certainly, one day, entering the chapter, he succeeded, not by reasoning, but by coaxing, as Gervase acknowledges, in winning the consent of the monks to the erection of another church at Lambeth. The compromise was signed and sealed; and was, therefore, confirmed, under anathema, by the Holy See.†

The monks in some other parts of England were almost as severely tried as at Canterbury. It will be needless, however, to recount their sufferings. One of their chief persecutors was Hugh de Nonant, the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, or, as he is termed by Pope Celestine, bishop of Chester.‡

Hugh had, at last, expelled by armed violence the monks of his cathedral at Coventry. He was some time after travelling in Normandy, when he was

* Gerv. pp. 1622—1628; Roger de Wend. pp. 135, 136.

† Thorn, Act. Pontif. Cant. p. 1681. Thorn lived in the fourteenth century: he is here quoted only for the documents which he inserted in his work.

‡ His predecessors had fixed their see at Chester, then at Coventry, then again at Lichfield; and thus, at last, never again returning to Chester, became known as bishops of Lichfield and Coventry.—(Godwin, Præs. p. 312, &c.) Celestine's epistle, declaring that Hugh had surreptitiously obtained the sanction of the Holy See, and ordering the restoration of the expelled community, may be found in the Annals of Burton, A.D. 1198.

seized with a mortal illness. He called the abbots and priors of all the duchy around his bed, and with clasped hands and profuse and incessant tears, confessed aloud all the sins of his life, and, amongst the rest, the expulsion of the monks of Coventry, and he entreated that, for his penance, they would enjoin him, if such were the will of God, to suffer the pains of purgatory to the day of judgment. To make his horror for the hatred which he had constantly shown against religious the more marked, he entreated that he himself might be made a monk before his death. His request was granted : he was invested with the religious habit, and expired in the peace of an humble and contrite heart.*

* Trevisa's R. Higd. Polychron. ; Roger de Wend. 1198, p. 125 ; Diceto, an. 1198.

CHAPTER XLV.

OCCASIONAL OPPRESSION OF THE CHURCH—LIFE, MIRACLES, AND DEATH OF ST. HUGH OF LINCOLN—SPLENDID FUNERAL PROCESSION—ELECTION TO THE SEE OF CANTERBURY DISPUTED—STEPHEN LANGTON CHOSEN AND CONSECRATED—JOHN'S FURY—EXPELS THE MONKS OF CANTERBURY FROM ENGLAND—LETTERS OF INNOCENT—AN INTERDICT—JOHN'S TYRANNY—SENTENCE OF EXCOMMUNICATION—HIS RECEPTION OF THE POPE'S LEGATES—SENTENCE OF DEPOSITION—JOHN'S SUBMISSION—MAKES HIMSELF THE FEUDATORY OF THE HOLY SEE—RETURN OF THE BISHOPS—REMOVAL OF THE INTERDICT, AND FINAL ARRANGEMENTS—PLANS OF THE BARONS—CIVIL WAR—DEATH OF JOHN—ABILITY OF THE LEGATES IN HENRY'S MINORITY—LAXITY OF DISCIPLINE, AND EFFORTS TO RETRIEVE IT—REMOVAL OF THE SEE OF OLD SARUM.

THE first years of the reign of John, Richard's brother and successor, were engrossed in a struggle with his nephew, Arthur, and the king of France. It was a period of much occasional oppression for the Church. The confiscation of the temporalities of the archbishop of York for excommunicating the sheriff of York, who had laid violent hands upon the possessions of clerics and religious, and the ejection of the monks of Canterbury from their monastery, were but a few of the tyrannical acts which proved this monarch to be of the same grasping disposition as his father and brother. As yet, however, his tyranny had not attained its maturity of wickedness.*

In this uneasy interval, died the great ornament of the English episcopacy, St. Hugh of Lincoln. What St. Anselm was at the beginning, and St. Thomas in the middle, of the twelfth century, St. Hugh was at its termination. Born in Southern Burgundy, he had become a monk in the Grande Chartreuse ; and retained

* Roger de Wend. an. 1200, vol. iii. p. 154 : Knighton.

the simple virtues of the cloister amidst the cares and magnificence of the episcopal dignity. His election, in the first instance, was owing to Henry II., who had already obtained for him an English Carthusian priory. When, however, he was told by the dean and a deputation of the chapter that he was elected, he refused his consent until, by a new election, he was convinced that their choice was really free. Some of the finest portions of Lincoln cathedral were built by St. Hugh.

As this holy bishop was in the habit of visiting the hospitals of lepers, kissing each one of them and bestowing upon the poor creatures large alms, his chancellor ventured to try whether in this there was any taint of pride. He, therefore, said to St. Hugh: "Martin healed the leper by a kiss; you do not heal the lepers whom you kiss." The bishop merely replied: "The kiss of Martin healed the leper's flesh; but the leper's kiss heals my soul."

Riding once through the village of "Cestrehunte," he was entreated to bless a man who was so furiously mad, that his friends had been obliged to keep him chained for three weeks. St. Hugh dismounted; sprinkled the maniac with holy water; read over him the gospel, "In the beginning was the Word;" gave him his blessing; and continued his journey. The man fell into a slumber, and awoke perfectly cured.*

While the new works at the cathedral were in progress, the bishop was often seen with a hod upon his shoulders, carrying stones and mortar to the workmen. Amongst those that observed this contempt of human respect, was a man who, being lame in both feet, was glad to creep along with the help of two sticks. This man began to think, that if he could only carry the saint's hod, he should be cured. By applying to the clerk of the works he gained his point, and hobbled along with stones and mortar. In a few days he found that he could dispense with one of his sticks; and in a few days more, with the other. Then

* Roger de Wend. iii. pp. 155—159. Roger was living at this time.

upright and sound of limb he continued his labour ; and was so much in love with the hod that he would never part with it.

St. Hugh had now for fourteen years discharged the duties of a zealous bishop, when he paid a visit to the "chief house" of the Carthusians, and returning to England, was seized in London with the quartan ague, and there, in the Old Temple, died the death of the just (A.D. 1200). Even to the last, he could not be induced to lay aside the sackcloth which he was always accustomed to wear. The citizens of London bore the sainted remains in solemn procession to Lincoln. They were four days on the journey ; but, observes Wendover, from the gates of London the whole way, despite of the tempestuous winds and rains of November, the wax candles which were borne in front, were never all extinguished.

The kings, John of England and William of Scotland, and a great multitude of bishops and barons, happened then to be assembled at Lincoln. They went forth to receive the body ; and the two kings, assisted by some of their earls and barons, carried it on their own shoulders to the gates of the stately cathedral. It was then delivered to the archbishops and bishops, by whom it was borne into the choir. There it lay in the vestments of a bishop ; the mitre on the head, gloves on the hands, the ring upon the finger. After the usual vigil the solemn dirge was chanted, and during the service the face of the departed, "according to episcopal rite," remained uncovered. A certain knight, well known to the canons of the church, took the opportunity to touch the face repeatedly. He had a cancer upon one arm, which had laid bare the very bone ; and he hoped to obtain a cure. Immediately the hideous wound was healed. The exulting knight displayed the healed limb repeatedly to the dean and other trustworthy men.*

A funeral so striking and magnificent, was the

* Roger de Wend. iii. pp. 160—164.

reward, observes Wendover, of the zeal of St. Hugh in burying the dead. If he had anything like a competent claim to perform the last rites in person, he never lost the opportunity.

Although John, like almost every other Catholic in those ages of faith, could thus do honour to the holy dead, his selfish and tyrannical spirit was still unchanged. A few years passed by, and then began a contest in which all the king's darker characteristics became fully developed.

In the summer of 1205, Hubert, the archbishop of Canterbury, died. As the monks of Christchurch wished to have the election, as it had been before the Norman conquest, quite free from royal authority, the younger monks, with the connivance probably of their elder brethren, assembled at midnight, just before the hour for reciting matins, and chose as Hubert's successor, Reginald, the sub-prior. They bound him by oath not to disclose the election until he had reached Rome; and then despatched him, at once, on his way, along with several of their brethren. As Reginald journeyed on, circumstances arose which made him think that his business would be accelerated by showing his letters. He seems to have thought that the monks did not intend the oath to be binding in such a case: at all events, he made several persons acquainted with the secret. Arriving, at length, at Rome, and presenting his letters, he was told by Innocent III. that there was a want of clearness in the proceedings, and that some deliberation and greater certainty were indispensable.

Soon after, another deputation of the monks of Christchurch arrived at Rome. The community were indignant that Reginald should have violated his plighted word. They considered, rather hastily, that the election was thereby annulled; and determined to proceed to another. To please the king, whose anger they had previously incurred, as well as to defeat Reginald, they lost sight of their first object; and now not only asked for John's permission to elect, but

unanimously and in the king's presence, chose the person whom he himself pointed out: this was John, the bishop of Norwich. The reason why he wished for John of Norwich's election, as he himself stated, was because he was more intimate with him, more conversant with his wishes and secrets, than any other bishop. Such a reason would be an excellent one, if the archbishop of Canterbury were only a royal minister; but as one giving himself to the service of God ought not to be entangled in secular business, such an avowal ought more than ever to have made the community assert their unshackled freedom of choice. Forgetting all, however, but their immediate object of pursuit, the defeat of Reginald, they elected the bishop of Norwich; and sent messengers to acquaint the Holy See, not without an ample supply of means from the king's treasury.

Scarcely had this second deputation waited upon Innocent, when a third, not from the monks, but from the English bishops, made its appearance. This last deputation claimed the right (and proved that that had been enforced in three cases) to share with the monks in the election of the archbishop of Canterbury. Innocent replied that by this very reasoning, they showed that without the monks, they ought not to have proceeded to an election: he therefore declared their election invalid. After weighing the arguments on both sides, he next forbade the bishops to interfere for the future in the election of the archbishop, imposing upon them "perpetual silence."*

The question between Reginald and John of Norwich was next pleaded. Both had been chosen contrary to the canons; John, before the former election had been duly pronounced invalid; and Reginald, because chosen by only a part of the community, and that, too, clandestinely by night. Both were, therefore, put aside; and both were alike forbidden evermore to aspire to the archiepiscopal dignity.

* Wendover, pp. 183—188, and 211.

As about two years had now passed since the death of Hubert, Innocent was anxious to lose no more time. He, therefore, commanded the monks at Rome to elect Stephen Langton, an Englishman and a cardinal priest, eminent both for learning and piety. They obeyed; and Stephen was consecrated at Viterbo by Innocent himself (June 27th, 1207).

This account of the election, Innocent himself wrote to the monks of Canterbury, entreating them, now that they had succeeded in vindicating their liberties against the suffragan bishops, to lay aside the zeal of bitterness and rancour; and urging them to remain firm and united, and to redouble their prayers to God, through St. Thomas, that the liberties which the martyr's blood had purchased, might not so soon be lost.*

Innocent wrote, likewise, to John to inform him of what had been done; describing, at the same time, the excellent qualities of the new archbishop.

John, however, was determined not to receive Langton; and being of too passionate a temperament to be easily appeased, he first turned his fury against the monks of Christchurch. He declared them guilty of treason against the rights of his crown for having chosen Reginald, and still more for having elected Cardinal Langton. His soldiers, with outcries and naked swords, burst into the monastery, and threatened to give it to the flames, unless the monks at once abandoned the country. They withdrew to Flanders. Their property was seized by the king.

John, at the same time, wrote a menacing letter to

* Ap. Wilk. i. pp. 515 and 517. What Innocent thus knew regarding the permission to elect, must far outweigh the statement of Wendover, that the monks had not received such authority (p. 212). The Waverley Annals confirm the Pope's account, stating briefly that Stephen was elected in the Roman curia "by the prior and monks of the church of the Holy Trinity" (A.D. 1207), who were therefore expelled by the king. Wendover is like his continuator, Matthew of Paris, when tried by contemporary documents. The passages, it is worthy of remark, on which Lingard founds his censure of Paris are really, for the most part, Wendover's.

Innocent, stating his surprise that the rights of his crown should have been tampered with by the Holy See, to which "his love had hitherto been so necessary." The Pope replied to John's letter, point by point. The king had asserted that Langton was unknown to him. Innocent remarked that this was certainly surprising; since John wrote to him three different letters congratulating him on his being appointed cardinal, and declaring that he had the intention of giving him an appointment at court. The king had said by his messengers, that his assent had not been asked, and that letters despatched for this purpose had not reached him. Innocent replied, that "although it was not the custom, with regard to elections made at the Holy See, to await the assent of the prince," yet that two monks had been sent for the especial purpose of asking his assent, but had been detained at Dover, in order that they might not be able to execute their mission. Notwithstanding the detention, continued the Pope's letter, "we gave the epistle concerning the appointment of proctors at the Holy See to your own messengers; while our courier presented to you the letter of the prior and monks requesting your assent. After all this, we thought it superfluous to ask your assent. Since, then, the election of Langton has been canonically held, we cannot forego it without loss of fame and peril of salvation. Listen not to those that 'fish in troubled waters.' It would not be safe to resist God and His Church, and that, too, when the glorious Thomas has so recently shed his blood in the cause, and when your father and brother have taken oath to abjure the wicked custom."

Innocent wrote also to the bishops of England; referred to the odium which he had incurred (meaning in France) by espousing the cause of John, and remarked that the people of England were too thoroughly Christian to follow an earthly against a heavenly King, knowing how to render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that

are God's. "Most sincerely do we love the king, and desire his honour," the letter continued; "but God must be preferred to man, and in matters of justice, there must be no acceptance or love of persons. By these apostolic writings, therefore, we strictly command you to approach the king's person, and in the spirit of liberty to exhort him, with reverence as your king, and with diligence as your son, to give salvation to souls, quiet to the people, honour to God, and liberty to the Church, by acquiescing in sound counsels and receiving the archbishop, whose loyalty we well know. If he will not, then putting aside worldly fear, and removing every impediment of contradiction and appeal, issue a general sentence of interdict through the whole of England, allowing no office to be celebrated but the baptism of infants and penance for the dying. Observe this exactly yourselves and by ecclesiastical censures enforce its observance on the part of others. But if you cannot all be present, let two perform this duty" (Aug. 27, 1208).

The command thus given, was repeated in a subsequent letter, in which all privileged monasteries throughout England and Wales, even the houses of Hospitallers and Templars, were included in one and the same sentence.

In answer to certain questions or difficulties laid before the Holy Father for solution, he replied, that on the Sundays priests were allowed to preach to the people in the cemeteries, and to bless and sprinkle water, and to distribute blessed bread; that penances might be inflicted upon the healthy as well as the sick; that women were to be churched outside the church-walls; that the dead were not to have "ecclesiastical burial;" and that on the day of the Passion, the cross, without any solemnity, was to be placed outside the church, "in order that the parishioners might adore it with their usual devotion."*

When the bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester

* See the Epp. ap. Wend. pp. 213—219; and Wilk. i. pp. 515—530

disclosed the Pope's commands, entreating John to submit. The king, in his blasphemous fashion, swore by the "teeth of God," that if the interdict were proclaimed, he would expel the prelates and clergy, and send any Roman clergy whom he found to the Pope with loss of eyes and nose. Lashing himself into still greater fury by his own threats, he ordered the three bishops to quit his presence if they valued life and limb.

The interdict was, therefore, proclaimed, and the bishops fled (A.D. 1208). No more the song of praise was heard; no more, each morning, numbers thronged, by sound of bell, to holy mass; no more, day after day told its successive history of Christ incarnate, and suffering or triumphant, or of his faithful followers and their deeds, or gave sacramental aid to tread in His glorious footsteps. The living sacrifice itself was no longer offered; the living presence was no longer approached. The churches were closed, and dark, and silent. Festival-days came and went; but they brought not their former consolation. Where were the crowds that used then to resort to the confessionals to bathe their robes in the blood of the Lamb? Where were the crowds that used to taste and see how sweet is the Lord in his holy sacrament? Where were the many faces cheerful all the day with a joy that beamed from the lightened heart, that gave vigour to innocent sports, that heightened mirth and took away its sting? All was gone: all was in gloom. Merry England lay under a darkness that foreshadowed, but too plainly, what has now been realized for three centuries.

As if all this were not enough, John added to the infliction by an indiscriminate persecution. The revenues of the clergy and Black Monks were swept into the king's treasury, a mere pittance being reserved for their support, in the hands of lay agents; and if either clergy or monks were found travelling, they were stripped of horse and baggage by the king's officers, without hope of redress. Hearing this,

Innocent wrote to John, laying much of the blame, not upon the king, but upon his flatterers; and yet warning him that obstinacy would provoke additional punishment. Henry, the duke of Saxony, likewise, about this time visited John, who was his uncle, and strove to induce him to submit. The emperor, Otho IV., also John's nephew, who had visited England some years before, and more than once had received large sums as a present from the king, thus wrote to him: "Since there is no prudence, no power, no counsel against the Lord, do not by kicking against the goad, rush into the misfortunes that usually happen. With all possible affection, we entreat you to make peace with the cardinal, a person, we believe, most devoted to your welfare, as well as with the monks of Canterbury, and the other ecclesiastical persons of your kingdom, 'to the honour of God and of Holy Church.'"*

All remonstrances being lost upon John, and the interdict having now continued for nearly two years, Innocent commanded the bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester to excommunicate the king by name. These bishops, having already abandoned the country, deputed the commission to those that remained. All of these, however, says Wendover, being "dumb dogs, not daring to bark," made no formal declaration. The rumour of such a sentence, however, was in every one's mouth.

The barons of the Exchequer, amongst others, made it, one day, the subject of conversation. One of them, Walter, the archdeacon of Norwich, remarking, at last, that it was unsafe for beneficed men to remain longer in the service of an excommunicated king, left the apartment, and returned home without asking the king's permission. When John heard of it, he sent after him a troop of soldiers to arrest him. He was heavily ironed, and thrown into a dungeon. After a few days he had a cope of lead wrapped about him; and both famishing and crushed by the weighty metal, he died gloriously, a martyr to obedience.†

* Ann. Wav. an. 1208—1209; Wend. pp. 210, 221, 225.

† Wend. pp. 228—230.

The king, at last, found one preacher, Alexander Cæmentarius, to defend, or rather extol, his cruelties, and to attack feebly, as well as presumptuously, the conduct of the Pope. Alexander said that England was scourged with a general interdict, not on account of John's fault, but of the sins of his people: John was only a rod of iron in the hands of divine justice. Alexander added, that the Pope had exceeded the limits of his authority; that he had nothing to do with lay possessions or the government of subjects. When, however, the people saw this courtly preacher enjoying the revenues of many of the benefices which John had seized, they were no longer surprised. When they saw him afterwards stripped of his ill-gotten wealth, and begging his bread from door to door, many applied to him the words of the Psalmist, "Behold the man that made not God his helper; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and prevailed in his vanity."

John was now preparing an expedition against Ireland. Before his departure, he summoned the White Monks or Cistercians, and other religious, and demanded money. They declined to give him any. As soon as he returned from Ireland, he levied a heavy tax upon the whole order of the Cistercians, dispersing its communities; and, at least in some cases, as at Waverley, carrying off all their property. Yet he forbade them to leave the country.*

Nor were the monks the only ones that were forced to remain, and endure his tyranny: he shut all the ports; no one was to go or come. He seized a noble matron, Matilda Lahaie, in the act of attempting to cross the sea; and threw her and her eldest son, a knight, into a frightful dungeon at Windsor, where she died of hunger and thirst.

* Perhaps the reason why the Cistercians before escaped the fate of the Benedictines, and now were severely mulcted, was, that in obedience to their "chief abbot," they had, until admonished by Innocent, conducted themselves as if exempt from the interdict.—Wend. p. 225.

Hearing that the archbishop of Dublin was dead, John ordered his officers to watch that no one should receive letters from the Pope, "which may be against us," and to send all offenders to receive his judgment.

He continued, meantime, grinding down the clergy and religious. When he thus secured their money, he forced them to sign a declaration that what they had given was perfectly gratuitous.

To such a degree did he carry his blind wrath against Langton, that he confiscated whatever benefices the archbishop had granted, and confiscated the revenues, and sold the woods and forests of the church of Canterbury, commanding every single tree to be rooted up.*

The tyrant, at last, thought that he had devised an effective and comprehensive scheme for escaping from his difficulties, and yet carrying his point. Having informed the Pope that he was ready to treat with him, he was soon greeted by two legates, Pandulf, a cardinal subdeacon, and Durandus, a Knight Templar. They were received at Northampton by the king in full parliament (Aug. 1211). "We have come from afar," they said, "at your request, O lord, to renew the peace of Holy Church, and to hear your wishes upon this subject." John pretended that he did not understand them, and at last agreed to everything, except to the admission of Langton, saying, with a menacing look, "I will hang him on the very spot on which he first sets his foot upon my territory."

The legates might well have been surprised to think that this was all for which they had taken so long a journey. "We now know your wishes," they remarked; "have you nothing more to say?" "I have said," was the only reply. "At your own request, we have come to see whether there was just cause, as you declared there was, for relaxing the interdict; yet all that you have uttered furnishes reason for confirming it."

* Ann. Wav. an. 1211, 1212.

The king answered that he had so much love for the Pope that he would allow him to confer the archbishopric upon any one but Langton; and that he would, at the Pope's request, allow the person thus appointed to take possession. This was the real point which the king wished to carry. His profession of love for the Pope must have provoked a smile in many of the nobles around him; but it must have made all see that John was acting a child's part by sending for the legates, and thinking that they would remove the interdict without his removing the cause. Whatever Pandulf's thoughts, his spirit was thoroughly aroused. "The Holy Church," he exclaimed, "is not accustomed to degrade an archbishop without a manifest reason; but it is accustomed to pull down rebellious princes from the highest pinnacle." He concluded by informing the tyrant that the Pope, conformably to the prayers of kings and nobles innumerable, had already pronounced sentence of excommunication against him, and that he had suspended it only until the legates had learned the king's wishes, but that now it was actually in force. As Pandulf thus announced the sentence, and added that all were freed from the obligation of their oaths of allegiance, John's only reply from time to time was, "What more?"—"you can do nothing but talk." When Pandulf had finished, John told him that he would make him and his retinue ride about the kingdom for a twelvemonth, if he had not had permission to come and defend his cause. "Your cause," said the legate, "we have promoted according to God; and you yourself we have loved; and at your bidding have come hither, believing you would obey God and your father, the Pope, and would make satisfaction to the Holy Church; but our hopes are vain. We call God to witness, that we have come into your land for no other purpose but to die for the cause of the Church, and that we expect at your hands no other reward."

John was in a mood, such as tyrants only could indulge in, to give the legates still greater reason to

expect death. He summoned a sheriff and a band of foresters, and bade them produce a number of prisoners, and proceed there and then to execution. Some they accordingly deprived of their feet; others they blinded, and others they hanged. Amongst those that were led to the gibbet was a pretended cleric. When Pandulf saw him, he would at once have excommunicated those that were going to lay hands upon him; but such a sentence ought to be passed with lighted candle. Pandulf was hastening out to find one, when the king terminated this melodramatic exhibition by surrendering the feigned cleric to his judgment. He gave him his liberty.

It seems to have been after this pitiful display that John, as fickle as he was headstrong, promised to allow the archbishop and the monks to enter the country. As, however, he would not consent to restore their property, the negotiation was broken off.*

As John had thus made a mockery of the Holy See, and, instead of submitting, had tyrannized more than ever over the churches of England, the archbishop and the bishops of London and Ely entreated the Pope to exert himself yet more for the afflicted Church. Innocent, accordingly, pronounced against John a formal sentence of deposition.

The general good of society is the only reason why there should be a king or other ruler. As soon as he ceases to act for the general good, he ceases to answer the end for which he was vested with authority. In practice, however, it is a most difficult question. In such a case, regarding the duties, and, therefore, the consciences, of all citizens, the judgment of an upright and learned man would be invaluable. No wonder Catholics resorted for this judgment to him who is Christ's vicar, who holds the keys, having, in all spiritual matters, the full power of binding and loosing. The deposition pronounced against John

* Ann. Wav. an. 1212, pp. 174 and 175, ap. Gale; Wilk. i. pp. 526, 527; Wend. p. 235.

seems to have been nothing more than such a judgment—a declaration that there were grounds sufficient to judge that John's character as king had been merged in that of a tyrant; that he was thwarting instead of promoting the good of his subjects; and that, therefore, his subjects might shake him off, and choose one not only in his title, but in his actions, a king.

Hearing that he had been solemnly deposed, and that the king of France was arming to execute the sentence, John, at first, summoned to Portsmouth all the strength of his kingdom. Fearing his own subjects, however, almost as much as the French, and dreading a prophecy of Peter, the hermit of Pontefract, that after Ascension-day he would cease to be king, he listened to the persuasions of Pandulf, the legate, who had arrived in France, and having invited him into England, promised a full restitution and submission (May, 1213). Nor was this all: John, with two bishops and eleven of the lay barons, his confidential advisers, by their free will, as they declared, and not from yielding to any claim made by the Pope, subjected the kingdom, even in temporal affairs, to the Holy See.

He now thought of leading his men against the French; but they refused to move as long as he remained excommunicated. Nor could he escape from this sentence until he had given proof of his sincerity. Langton and his fellow-bishops were, therefore, speedily recalled. They landed at Dover, and hastened to Winchester. As they entered the city, John met them; and falling prostrate before them, implored mercy for himself and his kingdom. With streaming eyes, the bishops raised him from the ground, led him to the gates of the cathedral, and there absolved him in presence of a vast multitude of every class of people (July, 1213). He then renewed, not only the oath of allegiance to the Pope which he had a little before taken, but his coronation oath to love and defend the Church, to judge his vassals by the just judgments of his court, to respect

each one's rights, to abolish every unjust law, and to enforce the good laws of his predecessors, and especially of King Edward the Confessor.*

Almost immediately after his absolution, John hastened to his army at Portsmouth. A multitude of knights there addressed him, declaring that their means had been consumed whilst awaiting his commands; and that, if he expected their services, he must assist them from the royal treasury. This the king at once refused, and embarked, as if expecting the army to follow. Finding that it had broken up and returned home, John landed, full of anger, and was soon, with a strong force of mercenaries, in the heart of England, menacing his suspected enemies with his vengeance. Langton, heedless of his fury, reminded him of his oath not to make war upon any one, unless by the judgment of his court. It was only by a threat of excommunication that the furious monarch was induced to halt, and to promise to assemble his council.†

As the interdict had not even yet been removed, Nicholas, the bishop of Tusculum, was now sent as the Pope's legate for this especial purpose, as well as to arrange the amount of the king's restitution, and to appoint pastors to the many vacant churches. In St. Paul's Cathedral, John publicly renewed the offer of the crown to the Holy See (Sept. 1213). The charter, which was drawn up on this occasion, was of the same tenor as that which had been delivered to Pandulf. It is of that class which is often termed Golden Bulls, being signed with a golden bull or seal. In this instrument John acknowledges his many offences against God and His Church, and declares that he knows not how to make due satisfaction, that, therefore, for His sake who humbled himself to death for us, "with the advice of our barons in council,‡ we offer and freely concede to God and His holy apostles

* Wend. iii. pp. 240—260, who has embodied the various charters at full length in his history.

† Wend. iii. pp. 261—263.

‡ "Communi consilio baronum nostrorum."

Peter and Paul, and to the holy Roman Church, our Mother, and to our lord, Pope Innocent III., and his Catholic successors, the whole kingdom of England, and the whole kingdom of Ireland; and henceforth receiving, and as a feudatory holding, them from God and from the Roman Church, we swear fidelity, and render liege homage. As a token of this offer and concession, and in place of all other services due, we will pay 1,000 marks annually—700 for England, and 300 for Ireland.” The instrument closes with the usual promise to aid his liege lord to the utmost against all his enemies, and with the oath of fidelity, and the signatures of five bishops and eleven barons. Given at St. Paul’s, London, 3rd October, 1213.*

John restored, according to agreement, the property of the Church; but as this had greatly suffered, houses and other buildings being dilapidated or ruined, and orchards and forests being cut down, it took several months to arrange the amount of restitution (June 29th, 1214). All was, at last, adjusted; and the interdict was removed. It had lasted more than six years and three months.†

In the same year, John in council granted a charter of free election to all the churches and monasteries. He claimed, indeed, the custody of all that were vacant; but promised, when permission to elect should be asked, never to refuse or defer it: if he did, the electors might choose a successor without his permission. After the election, he would always grant his assent, unless he “could legitimately prove” that he had a reasonable objection.

Innocent III. confirmed the grant of freedom of election; but remained silent with regard to the royal custody and assent.‡

In reward for the attachment to the Chair of St. Peter which John was now displaying, the Pope

* See charter, as inserted “word for word,” in an Ep. of Inn. III. ap. Wilk. i. pp. 541, 542; and Wend. pp. 252, &c., 274, &c., 281, &c.

† Wend. iii. p. 284.

‡ Wilk. i. p. 545; Thorn. p. 1866.

granted him the privilege, that no bishop should have power to excommunicate the royal chaplains without a special mission from the Holy See. Innocent, however, cautioned the king, that any abuse of such a privilege would merit its forfeiture.*

When the barons saw the success of the Church's efforts, they determined to make a combined attempt to recover their own liberties. The two years, therefore, that elapsed between the removal of the interdict and the death of John, was a period, first, of agitation, and then, especially after the signing of the Magna Charta, of open civil war (Oct. 1216). At the death of King John the whole country was in arms, one part against another; the king's loyal subjects and his more numerous mercenaries were arrayed, in all directions, against the confederate barons and their allies, the French.

The young king, Henry III., was, indeed, crowned, and then carefully guarded, by Peter des Roches, the bishop of Winchester, William, earl of Pembroke, the "Great Marshal," and other faithful and powerful men; but the war still continued, not a few of the barons exulting at the prospect of continued anarchy and pillage, and the French anticipating a second Conquest. Ravages, sieges, all the glory and misery of civil strife, rapidly accumulated. Two unexpected disasters—a defeat at sea, and the battle or fair of Lincoln, with its sanguinary pursuit to the very walls of London—struck the French power helpless at the feet of the king's guardians.

Peace was then made; and Louis of France, with his few surviving friends, returned home, whilst the English barons submitted (A.D. 1217).†

The firmness and prudence of the earl of Pembroke, and still more of Gualo, the Pope's legate, repressed those that had become impatient of authority, and assuaged the wounded pride of those that had yielded. Henry himself, about thirty years after his accession,

* Wilk. i, p. 546.

† Roger de Wend. an. 1216, 1217, and 1218.

acknowledged to Grostete of Lincoln, that "our mother, the Roman Church, by means of the Lord Gualo, the cardinal legate, then in England, brought back the kingdom to our peace and subjection." *

During the minority of the young Henry, Gualo and his successor, Pandulf, and, after their departure, Archbishop Langton, strenuously exerted themselves, not only for the temporal peace of the kingdom, but for its renovation in ecclesiastical discipline. As the interdict, removed in 1214, had been almost immediately followed by civil war, great disorders unhappily arose amongst both the clergy and laity. They were, however, zealously repressed by the canonical remedies of frequent synods and visitations.†

Whilst the legate Gualo was still in England, an arduous undertaking, contemplated for more than twenty years before, was happily accomplished. This was the removal of the see of Old Sarum to New Sarum or Salisbury. The double mounds of earth, both steep and high, that girt in the former, still remain. Within this formidable enclosure, where only a few scattered fragments of masonry are now to be seen, stood the castle and church of Old Sarum. The church was thus little better than the castle chapel, and the faithful were sometimes actually excluded. It was bad enough, when the warder, who had a good supply of water, yet compelled all comers to pay for what they took; but much worse was it, because directly against every devotional feeling, when Ash-Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten fast, or the days for ordinations came on, or any other days on which the faithful were accustomed to throng to the churches, and the governor declared, as not unfrequently happened, that it would be unsafe to admit so many within the fortifications. All these reasons, as well as the exposed situation, with nothing for many miles to check the force of the winds, which

* Grost. ep. 117, ap. Browne's Fascicula Rer.

† The nature of these synodal decrees may be sufficiently understood from some extracts given in the Appendix D.

were continually carrying away portions of the roof, were laid before the Pope by the dean and chapter. The many inconveniences of such a locality having been proved under the seals of witnesses, the Pope granted permission, "saving the rights of all persons whatever, both secular and ecclesiastical, and the privileges, dignities, and liberties of the Church itself."

The canons accordingly pledged themselves to give a fourth part of their annual income of money for seven years. Some of them likewise visited other parts of England and Scotland, collecting alms for the same purpose. The foundations of the new cathedral, the present noble and uniform structure, were laid in 1220.*

* See a contemporary history, including the documents, ap. Wilk. i. pp. 551—554.

CHAPTER XLVI.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY — SELF-GOVERNMENT AN INHERENT RIGHT OF THE CHURCH—ITS SURRENDER OF THIS RIGHT IMPOSSIBLE — THE RIGHT OF PATRONAGE: ITS NATURE AND EXTENT—A GENERAL SUSPENSION OF THE RIGHTS OF PATRONS—"PROVISIONS"—THEIR OBJECT—STATE OF EUROPE: THE SARACENS, TURKS, AND TARTARS —GENERAL EVILS RESULTING FROM THE MISCONDUCT OF FREDERICK II.—HIS DEPOSITION AND DEATH—THE POPE'S APPEAL FOR AID TO ALL CHRISTENDOM—HONORIUS III.'S PROPOSAL REGARDING "PROVISIONS"—CONTESTS OF HENRY III. WITH THE MONKS OF DURHAM AND THE CANONS OF SALISBURY.

THE Catholic Church holds its charter of free and complete self-government direct from the fountain-head of all legitimate authority, from the Creator and Redeemer of the human race: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." Gifted with this surpassing rule, the bishops and clergy of the church of Ephesus and Miletus might well be cautioned by St. Paul to "take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the Church of God." Amongst the duties thus intrusted to them, one of the most important was to watch over the transmission of this power to their successors: "The things which you have heard of me," writes St. Paul to St. Timothy, "the same commend to faithful men who shall be fit to teach others also."

Hence the anxiety of the Church at all times to procure "faithful men:"—to rear its ministers in such a manner that they may be thoroughly known and tried, in character as well as in knowledge, before their ordination. Hence, too, it is, that generally where the hierarchy is fully established, a priest, for some time after he has received the care of souls, is sub-

jected not only to the episcopal visitation, but to reiterated examinations.

If, therefore, the Church concedes to any lay person a share in its appointment of "faithful men, fit to teach others," such as is the right to present to a living, it cannot make the concession absolute; it cannot, for instance, concede the right to judge of the presentee's fitness; and it is bound, from the very nature of its own authority, to watch over the use made of its concession, and must remain the sole judge of the season for continuing, suspending, or annulling it. Even this limited concession could not be made, were it a matter purely spiritual. Being, however, mixed, a concession becomes lawful. A brief sketch of the nature and limitations of such a concession may be of some service.

The chapel, or church, or benefice, must be, ground and building alike, legally conveyed or made over to the Church. The endowment must be equally secured: to touch it, after it has once been granted, would be to incur excommunication and total forfeiture of the right of patronage.

This right, moreover, cannot be purchased: here again the concession is guarded by excommunication and privation. For the founder does not, by making over the building and endowment, purchase the right of patronage: it is either a free gift, or it is rejected by the Church, as simoniacal. The Church, however, when it has received such a free gift, makes some acknowledgement, by granting the power to present. This power is as ample as the Church can give, without trenching on its own duty of self-government, or on anything purely spiritual.*

Yet is it, in many ways, exceedingly limited. It is limited with regard to the person to be presented: he

* To test, or to add to, these remarks, see Council of Trent, sess. xiv. c. 12 and 13, and sess. xxv. c. 9; and compare Ferraris, *Bibl. and Zallinger*, lib. iii. titul. 38. In some cases, as where there has long existed the building, but having no endowment, the right of patronage is granted for simply endowing.

must have passed a canonical examination, and even then it will lie heavy on the patron's conscience, if the presentee be not the more, in preference to the less, worthy. It is limited with regard to time: if the patron does not appoint within a fixed time, generally four months, the bishop is bound to fill up the vacancy without further delay. It is limited, too, by the general prerogative by which the Pope, as all canonists agree, has full power over all benefices.* Each parish priest has his flock, each bishop his diocese; and the eyes of parish priest and bishop may be keen enough, generally speaking, for their comparatively narrow sphere of watchfulness, and yet fail to understand fully their own necessities, or to discern those of the remote parts of the Church. One only is there whose place it is to watch over all; to discern evils the most subtle or distant; to avert every form of danger; and to meet the exigence of every crisis.

How could this be done, but by a plenitude of power, an absolute unquestionable right to annul, transfer, or suspend privileges, concessions, and jurisdiction?

This highest kind of jurisdiction had been called into exercise during the late critical events. When John had been compelled to admit Langton, and the interdict was about to be removed, it was found that the number of vacant sees and benefices was exceedingly great. Innocent III. deemed it necessary to make use of his plenitude of power; and thus, without further delay, to provide the full number of pastors. He wrote, on the one hand, to the chapters of the vacant churches, calling upon them to acquiesce in the nominations of his legate, Nicholas; and, on the other, he commanded Nicholas to ascertain from trustworthy men those that were suitable for the vacant offices, and overcoming the fear of man by that of God, to appoint them without delay or appeal.

Langton and his suffragans appealed to the Pope

* Ferr. Bibl.; "Beneficium," art. iv. Nos. 2, 84, and 85.

himself, on the ground of not having been consulted; but Innocent saw too clearly the necessity for this departure from ordinary forms, to be induced to abandon his design.*

So general a suspension of the usual rights of chapters and other patrons, is, however, very unusual, and in England was, perhaps, unprecedented; but a more limited suspension was not uncommon. The reason for this latter kind of suspension, or of “provisions,” as it was usually called, will be best explained by the Pope’s reply to some complaints made upon this exercise of power.

“Honorius to the archbishop of Canterbury.—Since those that faithfully serve the Apostolic See, as the head of the universal Church, are proved to be of great service to each member, as it may be termed, it is right that they should be honoured with suitable benefices, lest, undergoing so arduous a service at their own cost, they grow remiss. Hence it is that the clergy of the Apostolic See, residing not without great labours and expenses in England and other parts of the world, have obtained ecclesiastical benefices for a limited period, to the profit oftentimes of the patrons themselves. But because, unfrequently, on the departure of beneficed persons of this kind, they have left successors without consulting the patron; wishing to remedy this, and to prevent the patrons’ generosity from causing them a loss, we decree that when Italians have held a benefice, and are leaving the country for ever, the said benefice return freely to the patrons, to be conferred by them upon a suitable person. Let this be proclaimed throughout the whole of England” (A.D. 1221).†

The necessity for employing learned men in such

* Wend. iii. pp. 277, 278. Wendover censures what he calls the legate’s incivility in this ungracious task; and does not forget to tell us that Nicholas found some of his own clerics to be trustworthy enough for several vacant benefices; but Wendover’s resemblance to Matthew of Paris in his love of censure is painfully obvious.

† Ap. Wilk. i. p. 584.

matters is self-evident, and the justice not only of barely supporting, but of remunerating them, equally so. This necessity extended to both parties : while the Pope's legates and messengers and other officials were busy in behalf of the English church, both in England and at Rome, those employed by the English clergy, at the Holy See and in the king's courts, were considered indispensable. The latter class was remunerated "from the common substance of the clergy."* The object of the former class being for the benefit of the latter, their remuneration ought to be from the same substance.

As no further complaints are heard of for some years, it would seem that the Pope's explanation gave general satisfaction. There was now arising, however, another, and for many years a ruinous, cause of expense to the Holy See, which it is necessary to know, in order to estimate aright the events of this period. This was the contest in which the Popes had been obliged to engage with Frederick II., the king of the Two Sicilies and emperor of Germany. This prince had been educated, and during his minority defended, by the disinterested friendship of Innocent III. To the pontiff's exertions he owed, moreover, the imperial crown. Under his care he had grown up one of the most accomplished of contemporary princes in the arts both of peace and war. He repaid these benefits with utter ingratitude.

His conduct with regard to the Crusades was the first public proof of his real character. The Crusades were wars of liberty or slavery ; life or death. The followers of Mahomet, whether the Saracen of Arabia, or Turk of the Altaian mountains, sought avowedly to propagate their sensual creed by the sword. For nearly six hundred years they had made incessant war upon all their Christian neighbours, until they had trampled them down, one after another, from the walls of Constantinople to those of Jerusalem and

* See "Capitula quædam ad Libertatem Ecclesiasticam spectantia," ap. W. ii. pp. 22 and 30.

Alexandria; and from these latter again even to the Straits of Gibraltar and the Pyrenees. Their galleys swarmed upon every part of the Mediterranean. Sometimes checked by Genoese, Venetians, or Knights of Rhodes, they yet contrived to ravage every coast; and winning island after island, gave reason to fear that they would succeed at last in overwhelming Europe.

Another enemy, too,—the very race that had crushed the old Roman empire, was again in the field. Enraptured at the call to pillage, the wild Tartar tribes of Central Asia, the kinsmen of the Turks, were now, under their emperors or Jenghis Khans, rioting in the spoils of China, Hindostan, Siberia, and Russia. Swelling, in their advance, by the addition of every warlike horde in their path, they were now rolling on in one vast flood upon Hungary and Germany. As yet, however, their terrible advance was from afar: there was time to deal a vigorous blow at the triumphant Turk and Saracen.

It was Frederick's place as emperor to lead the war. Peace was out of the question. Frederick's own patrimonial kingdom of the Two Sicilies was the most exposed, and some of its ravaged territory had actually been re-peopled by Saracens. Everything warned him to arm at once. He had, moreover, voluntarily taken the cross; and had bound himself, under pain of excommunication, to hasten to the succour of the Christians of the East. Warriors from England, France, and every part of Europe had assembled in Southern Italy to follow his banner to Jerusalem (A.D. 1227). Yet did he hesitate, crave delay after delay, until many thousands of the vast crusading army had sickened and died, and the opportunity was lost.

Then, to elude the excommunication, the inglorious monarch hurried to Palestine, betrayed the Christians by patching up a disastrous peace, without consulting the old chiefs who had long borne the brunt of the struggle, and returned to Italy only to continue an

unprovoked war against the states of the Church. Then he submitted to the insulted Pope; and on promising better things, and especially to restore bishops whom for years past he had been in the habit of expelling at pleasure from their sees, he is pardoned and reinvested with the lands which he had forfeited.

Thus delivered from excommunication, he suddenly wrests Sardinia from the Holy See; bribes Roman citizens to expel the Pope (A.D. 1237); and, not content with being a tyrant to his own impoverished subjects, endeavours to seize Rome and become the master of all Italy, letting loose an army of hired Saracens upon the country; and finally baffles the Pope's attempt to hold a general council, by seizing and shutting up in his dungeons great numbers of those that were on their way to it, both laymen and ecclesiastics. The Pope dies amidst these calamities, and Innocent IV., a special friend of the emperor's, succeeds. By his decision, Frederick swears to abide, but secretly prepares to seize his person.

Escaping, therefore, to France, Innocent convokes the general council of Lyons, in which, besides a vast concourse of bishops and abbots, there were present the ambassadors of the kings of France and England, as well as Baldwin, the emperor of Constantinople, Raymond, count of Toulouse, and many other secular princes (A.D. 1245).

The state of the Crusades, and the misconduct of Frederick against the Church, were the subjects of discussion. Frederick was accused by many of the bishops of various crimes; and, by the voice of the whole council, had a day fixed for his defence. Not appearing, he was declared to have forfeited "all honour and dignity," and, with lighted tapers, the council pronounced against him the anathema of the Church.

Frederick, however, continues for a while a fierce struggle with the banded states of Italy; is at last totally defeated at Parma; and, retiring to his own Neapolitan dominions, "he," writes Dandola, the

doge of Venice, "that surpassed all the emperors from Charlemagne in riches, power, and glory, being oppressed with a sore distemper, dies, carrying with him nothing but his sins" * (A.D. 1250).

The struggle which had thus been maintained by successive popes closely affected the independence of the Holy See, no less than the general defence of Christendom. Their resources were quite inadequate to the struggle; and the more so, because the states of the Church were repeatedly laid waste. They entreated help from all Christian nations; and they deemed the emergency pressing enough to warrant the utmost exertion of their prerogative: they felt bound both to call upon the clergy of every land, to grant them some portion of their incomes called tallages, and equally bound to increase the "provisions" or suspensions of advowsons. The necessity of such assistance even for his own decent maintenance the Pope did not endeavour to conceal. He mentioned his distresses frankly, and seldom failed to receive both aid and sympathy.

Occasionally, indeed, the answer to his applications was less prompt; but, on the whole, was seldom discouraging. In 1225, in the earlier part of the struggle with Frederick, Otho, the Pope's legate, was sent to England, to convey a letter, complaining, on the one hand, of the misstatements by which procurators sent to the Holy See, endeavoured to conceal their own wastefulness, and, on the other, making known a plan for aiding the Pope, and for remunerating, with as little abuse as possible, the general external business

* Compare Rich. de St. Germ. apud Muratori, *Rer. Ital. Script.* t. vii. p. 989, &c., with And. Dand. ap. Muratori, t. xii. *passim*; Card. Ar. ap. Mur. t. iii. p. 582, &c.; Vita Inn. by Frat. Nich. ap. Mur. t. iii. p. 592; Gest. Sti. Ludov. ap. Duchesne, t. v. p. 336, and documents in Raynaldus, an. 1215, 1221, 1227, &c.; or test the authorities collected by the present writer in "Church and Empire in the Thirteenth Century" (Dubl. Rev. No. 34, Dec. 1844); or see a good summary of Frederick's misconduct by the Chronicler of the Waverley Annals, an. 1239, p. 199. This portion of the Chron. Wav. is evidently written by a contemporary.

of church government. By the announcement of this plan, it was evident that the Holy See did not intend to take patrons by surprise ; but, on the contrary, to make advances to obtain their free concurrence. It even proposed to limit to a certain class of benefices its own right of suspending. The letter stated, in the first place, that the interests of the Church needed a good reputation, as well as a good conscience ; just as the pomegranates as well as the little bells hung together from the garments of Aaron. Yet, it continued, even our reputation has been assailed. The tongues of detractors have aspersed the Roman Church by maligning not only the decisions of rigorous justice, but those of kindness and favour. The men that chiefly offend thus are those that, being sent here to transact business, spend the money of others in their own pleasures, and conceal their injustice by calumniating us. For a remedy to this, we have consulted with our brethren, in order to decide in what manner, and with what precautions, we might find the salutary effect of a provision : a plan not unknown to our predecessors. We wish, then, that one prebend in each cathedral or collegiate church be reserved for this purpose. Until this can be done, let revenues be provided in those churches as well as in monasteries for the support of ourself and our brethren at the Holy See, as well as our other officers, and then let every kind of business be discharged, without any fee or gratuity whatever. Let a most heavy sentence punish any here that infringe this rule ; and let each prebend, as it becomes vacant, revert to its respective church.*

When Otho first presented himself to the king, the latter declined interfering : it was, he said, a transaction touching the great body of the patrons, both clergy and laity ; but after some delay, the king, by the advice of the bishops and nobles, replied to the legate that the business mentioned had reference

* See the document, as inserted in a contemporary history of the church of Salisbury, ap. Wilk. i. p. 558.

to the whole of Christendom; that the English, being in a distant corner of the world, would await the decision of other parts, and then would exceed them all in good offices. With this answer, such as it was, the legates departed from Rome (A.D. 1226).*

As far as can be gleaned from the few remaining documents of that age, the replies sent to the Holy See, when Gregory IX. executed with regard to provisions what Honorius had planned, were more satisfactory. Thus, the canons of Salisbury, finding their advowson to one of their prebends suspended, and having occasion to communicate with Rome, make neither remonstrance nor remark; they merely express their devotedness to the Holy See, and return thanks for favours received; and particularly for the authority given to the bishops of Bath and Coventry to make inquiry into the life and miracles of St. Osmund, formerly bishop of Old Sarum (A.D. 1228).

While the Popes were thus exercising their right of suspending advowsons, the temporal power, on its side, endeavoured to intrude upon the same province. The see of Durham was vacant, Richard de Marisco, its bishop, having died suddenly in his sleep. The prior and convent, therefore, requested the royal permission to proceed to the election of his successor. Henry replied by proposing Luke, one of his chaplains. On their refusal, the king declared that unless they complied, he would keep them seven years without a pastor. Firm, however, in their right, they chose and presented to Henry, William Scot, one of the archdeacons of Worcester. As the king adhered to his determination, the monks appealed to Rome. For some unexplained cause, both Luke and William were rejected by the Holy See, and Richard of Salisbury was translated to Durham. The canons of Salisbury chose for their bishop, Robert Bingham, one of their own chapter.†

* Wend. iv. an. 1225, 1226.

† Ap. Wilk. Conc. i. pp. 560 and 561.

‡ Wend. an. 1226, 1228.

Thus far defeated, Henry was more successful in presenting to a Salisbury prebend. Before Robert Bingham was chosen bishop, a canon of that cathedral, Simon de Haketon, had resigned his benefice in order to embrace the religious life. Henry immediately claimed the right to present. He had the charge of the see, he said, during its vacancy, and, therefore, presented Ralph, the Welshman. If, however, the nomination to a prebend belonged not to the chapter, but to the bishop, still the jurisdiction and administration of a vacant see undoubtedly devolve upon the chapter. The utmost that Henry could claim was the charge of the merely temporal property, and this itself was a custom unrecognized and of recent growth. The claim to present was a novelty, but was quite in accordance with the encroaching spirit of worldly power, being a logical deduction from the former, if only the former could be maintained as an incontestable principle; and if, moreover, advowsons were secular property. When worldly power reasons, it is silent about such uncomfortable restrictions; and so, on the present occasion, was Henry III. The chapter, however, could supply what was ignored in Henry's reasoning; and the canons therefore demurred, and, at first, resisted. They finally yielded, weakly and ingloriously.*

* Ap. Wilk. Conc. i. pp. 564, 565. If any one would learn the close examination into the fitness of elections made by the Holy See, he should not omit to read the close of the History of the Salisbury Chapter, apud Wilk. Conc. i. p. 569.

CHAPTER XLVII.

TROUBLED STATE OF SOCIETY—RIVALRY OF DES ROCHES AND DE BURGH—DEATH OF LONGSWORD—HUBERT'S MISRULE INSTIGATES A PARTY AGAINST THOSE THAT HAD BEEN INSTALLED BY "PROVISIONS"—DE TWENGE, THE ACTING LEADER OF THE PARTY—DE BURGH'S DISGRACE AND IMPRISONMENT—A GENERAL VISITATION BY COMMAND OF GREGORY IX.—ST. EDMUND RICH—MISGOVERNMENT—CIVIL WAR—THE KING REBUKED BY THE BISHOPS—DISMISSAL OF DES ROCHES AND THE POICTEVIN MERCENARIES.

EVER since the "Fair of Lincoln," and the expulsion of the French, the state of the country had continued to improve, but was still almost every year violently disturbed. Some baron would plunder his neighbour's lands; or if, when riding with his retainers to the king's court, he observed the strong castle of a feudal enemy carelessly guarded, would turn aside to rush upon the tempting prey. When fined for such an act, he would waylay and carry off his very judge. Then would follow some such siege as that of Bedford Castle, to take which all the resources of the kingdom would be taxed.

In the midst of this broken repose, Peter des Roches, one of John's foreign favourites, who, from being a knight, was by the late king's contrivance, made bishop of Winchester, and Hubert de Burgh, the royal justiciary, were now the young king's guardians. Unfortunately, they each represented a hostile section amongst the still divided barons. As long, indeed, as the Pope's legates were in the country, their rivalry was sufficiently counterpoised; but when the legates had returned home, and the powerful and prudent earl of Pembroke was no more, they and their supporters stood apart, in a more hostile attitude. The vigorous siege of Bedford Castle had been urged by Hubert,

chiefly, it would seem, because the offending party was one of Peter's friends (A.D. 1224).*

Whilst busily engaged in supplanting his rival, Hubert excited the anger of a powerful and unexpected antagonist. This was no other than the famous Longsword, the earl of Salisbury, and uncle of Henry III. Longsword had been wrecked on the Isle of Rhé (A.D. 1226). Hubert, thinking that he was drowned, went to the king, and, with the unbecoming haste of a desperate gamester in politics, proposed a match for the countess of Salisbury.

Henry assented, on condition of the countess's acquiescence. The countess, however, when applied to, repelled the suitor of Hubert's choice with the utmost indignation. To add to the minister's discomfiture, the redoubted earl himself soon made his appearance, demanding from the king justice against Hubert. There was, perhaps, hesitation in the king's manner, for Longsword added, that unless full justice were granted, he would take it into his own hands, to the grievous disturbance of the realm. Hubert was himself present; and, humbling himself before the crusader, acknowledged his fault, and pacified him with presents of costly steeds and other gifts. Forgetting his wrath, the earl now consented to dine with the humbled justiciary. There, almost in Hubert's house, ended the career of Longsword. He returned sick from his visit; and betook himself to his bed of death, in Salisbury Castle. The report at the time was, that he was poisoned at Hubert's table.

However that may be, he at once set his house in order. When the bishop himself entered the chamber with "the body of our Lord," he found the sick nobleman upon his bed stripped completely to his drawers, as if mindful of Job's expression: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." Seeing the bishop coming in, Longsword sprang from his bed just as he was, and with a rough

* Wend. an. 1204, tom. iii. p. 181, and an. 1218—1224, *passim*.

halter about his neck, and declaring himself a traitor to his King, the Most High, threw himself prostrate upon the floor. No entreaties could induce him to give a respite to his poor feeble body, by returning to his bed: there, stretched prostrate on the ground, he confessed and received holy Communion. Persevering thus in rigorous penance for several days, he, at length, yielded up his soul.*

Hubert's thoughts, meantime, were all upon the earth. Having escaped one danger, he hastened on with rapidity in a course of short-lived triumph; and then threw himself rashly into another, which finally overwhelmed him.

His triumph was complete at the time of a great council at Oxford. There Henry not only declared himself of age and took the reins of government into his own hands, but showing himself more than ever the creature of Hubert, dismissed, by his interested advice, Des Roches and all the other friends of his youth, retaining none but the justiciary and his favourites.

Hubert now acted almost as if he himself were king. Although he tarnished his reputation by his imbecile wars in France, he feared not to act without consulting the great nobles, the constitutional advisers of the crown; and, at the same time, to set at naught, in various ways, the laws and rights of Holy Church. Richard of Canterbury, the successor of Stephen Langton, being unable to obtain redress from the king, presented himself before the Pope, and complained, amongst other things, that Hubert had invaded the possessions of the see of Canterbury; and had married a wife (a daughter of the king of Scotland), who was closely related to his former wife. Richard complained, too, that the bishops, his suffragans, sat as judges, even of blood, in the king's Exchequer, to the great neglect of their dioceses; and that some of the clergy who had the care of souls, imitated their evil

* Wend. an. 1226.

example by taking part in secular trials. Some of the king's chaplains had followed Richard, and now laboured (alas for human infirmity!) to throw doubt upon his statements. The Pope, however, quickly silenced them; and Richard was returning to apply an immediate remedy to the evils of the Church, when, by God's inscrutable providence, he was taken ill and died.*

Thus far, Hubert had laughed at the muttered complaints of injured men. Now, however, his doom was closing fast upon him. He was implicated in a conspiracy against those that had received benefices in virtue of the Pope's "provisions." Threatening letters against such men had already been widely circulated, when suddenly the barns of the "Roman" clergy were in several parts of the country broken into and rifled by armed men whose faces were muffled. These men, never more than eighty in number, and sometimes fewer, all obeyed the commands of one, whom they called William Wither. The real name of this person was Robert de Twenge. He was a Yorkshire knight, whose advowson or right of patronage had been suspended. Thinking, it seems, that an inalienable right had been taken from him, he sought the revenge of a freebooter. As soon as he had rifled the barns of one Roman cleric, he hastened to those of another. The corn and other produce was of no service to him, and might disarm opposition; he gave it to the neighbouring poor, or sold it, and then scattered some of the money amongst the crowd. He threatened with fire and sword any that paid dues to such incumbents, or that might venture to interfere.

It was Hubert's place, as justiciary of all England, to quell these disturbances. He, however, looked on in silence. Impunity emboldens; and Wither's band continued their visits. If, as sometimes happened, the sheriff and his men approached the scene of riot, the spoilers exhibited royal letters-patent,

* Ib. an. 1227—1231.]

and continued their ravages. They once met a Roman cleric, a canon of St. Paul's. They carried him off, but he contrived to make his escape with the loss of his purse (A.D. 1232). The bishops immediately pronounced the anathemas of the Church upon the despoilers.*

These outrages had continued some months, when they reached the ears of Gregory IX. He wrote an indignant expostulation to Henry. He wrote, at the same time, to Peter of Winchester, to the abbot of Edmundsbury, and other ecclesiastics, to trace out the offenders and put them under the ban of excommunication until their appearance at the Holy See.

The search being supported by the royal authority, and the facts being notorious, the guilty were speedily discovered. The most remarkable feature in the case was, that many persons both ecclesiastics and laymen, and even, says Wendover, some bishops, deans, knights, and sheriffs, had, in some way or other, consented to these acts of violence. Much, however, was explained when the fact was elicited, that it was Hubert de Burgh who had given the armed plunderers the royal letters-patent to prevent any kind of interference. The justiciary had already abused his power in a similar manner, when Richard, the late archbishop, was striving to prevent his illicit marriage, having delayed the proceedings by royal letters-patent which he himself had issued to the judges.

The acting ringleader, Twenge, endeavoured at first to outbrave the ecclesiastical censures: he preferred, he said, an unjust sentence of excommunication to the loss of his patronage. The king, however, advised him to go to Rome for absolution, and then to plead his right before his Holiness.

What may have been Hubert's object in countenancing these men, is by no means clear; but certainly his misconduct now placed him at the mercy of his enemies. Many charges, besides his connivance at

* Roger de Wend. an. 1231, 1232.

the late acts of violence, being brought against him, he gladly made his escape from London, where the people would have torn him to pieces, and took sanctuary at the priory of Merton, in Surrey. Even then he was scarcely safe: "the common bell" called the citizens to arms; and when the mayor signified to them the king's wish to bring into his presence the justiciary, whether alive or dead, twenty thousand men immediately marched in that direction in battle-array. They were, however, countermanded by another order from Henry. After an interval of great terror, the justiciary was torn from the altar; and although restored to sanctuary by the exertions of the bishop of London, was, finally, obliged to surrender, and was thrown into a dungeon in the Tower.*

The fall of Hubert afforded, undoubtedly, some respite to the afflicted church of Canterbury; but it was without an archbishop. Well aware that a zealous and enlightened pastor was now more than usually necessary, the Pope examined carefully the qualities of several candidates, and rejected them all. One, a royal chaplain, was found too illiterate; another, when proposed, was shown to be too old and feeble; and a third, being strongly suspected of having simoniacally received 2,000 marks from Peter des Roches, who had taken Hubert's place, and being convicted of holding two benefices, with the care of souls attached to each, was ignominiously dismissed.†

Not to be wanting himself in watchfulness, Gregory meantime, far advanced in years as he was, took advantage of the first pause in his contest with Frederick, to begin a rigid visitation of all ecclesiastical establishments, secular or religious (A.D. 1232). Those monasteries that were exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, being immediately under the Holy See, did not

* Roger de Wend. an. 1232; Chron. Dunst. 207, ap. Hearne. The latter Chronicle speaks of the destruction of the "Roman" corn as being contrived "per conspirationem quorundam clericorum et militum."

† Wend. an. 1231 (p. 228), 1232 (p. 243), 1233 (p. 267).

escape. They were visited by abbots of the Cistercian and Præmonstratensian orders ; and bitterly does Wendover, himself a Benedictine, and, it seems, a royal historiographer, complain of their “ indiscreet and very harsh ” method of visitation.*

This complaint probably means no more than that the abbots were zealous and impartial. Certainly there appears from the Pope’s letters, inserted in Wendover’s own chronicle, to have been considerable laxity, especially amongst the Benedictines. Gregory strictly enjoined, that delinquents should be punished, not by the customary methods which had crept in, but by the rule of St. Benedict ; and that those abbots, and those priors of houses not subject to abbots, who had not hitherto attended the general chapters, should no longer claim exemption, but be forced, if necessary, by ecclesiastical censures to attend. As the general chapter was an assemblage of religious superiors, with full powers to enforce the rule in each and all of their monasteries, the fact of every superior, without exception, being compelled to attend, and there to lay open the state of his monks, would be, as the council of Lateran intended, a powerful means of counteracting the first downward tendencies of human weakness, and of perpetually renovating the true Benedictine discipline.

When the multiplied business that accompanied and followed the visitation was over, Gregory, grieving for the widowhood of the church of Canterbury, ordered the monks, who had just presented the third candidate, to appoint to the vacant see St. Edmund Rich, then a canon of Salisbury.†

St. Edmund was the eldest son of a citizen of Abingdon. His father, having provided sufficient for educating his children and settling them in business, went, with his wife Mable’s consent, to the monastery of Evesham, and there became a zealous monk. Mable, although remaining in the world, united in

* Wend. an. 1232.

† Wend. an. 1233, iv. pp. 267, 298.

herself the duties both of the active and contemplative lives. Never failing to go to midnight matins, and to exercise herself in arduous self-denial, still less did she fail in all the duties of a mother who loves not merely the bodies, but the souls, of her children. From their earliest years, she taught them what sweetness, says Trivet, is to be found in the name of Christ. She accustomed them to so prudent as well as abundant a use of vigils, hair-shirts, and fasts, as to disengage them from the world, without breaking their strength or spirit. She allured them by little gifts into this holy practice, until the habit was well rooted. Faithful to her lessons, and to God's grace, the young Edmund surpassed even these lessons. On Sundays and holidays, he recited on his knees before breakfast the whole of the Psalms. Every Friday he fasted on bread and water.*

After studying at Oxford, he was sent with Robert, his brother and biographer, to finish his studies at Paris. The parting gift of their mother, a true Maccabee, was a hair-shirt for each; her last farewell advice was to use it several times a week, in order to tame the love of pleasure. Brought up in these heroic practices, the saint passed securely through all the trials of a university education. During its course, he always attended midnight matins, and gave the rest of the night and early morning to meditation, mass, and other devotions. His studies were accompanied with frequent ejaculations to God, or loving words to the ever-blessed Virgin, whose image, fitly encompassed with the sculptured representation of the mysteries of man's redemption, always, in such occupations, stood before him. As he seldom ate more than one meal a day, and that a very frugal one, he had a large surplus for the poor. He never undressed, or lay down upon his bed, for thirty years together.

Thus advancing both in self-conquest and in learning, he taught mathematics and literature for six

* See his life, ap. Martene and Durand, *Thes. Nov. Anecd.* tom. iii. p. 1777, &c.

years, and then applying exclusively to theology, and having taken the degree of doctor, he gave himself up less to the usual scholastic lectures, than to his beloved occupation of assiduous preaching.

Becoming a canon, and then the chancellor, of Salisbury, he drew upon himself, by his learning and virtue, the eyes of the whole Church. The Pope committed to his prudence and eloquence the preaching of the Crusade in 1232; and now could find no one better qualified to fill the vacant see of Canterbury.* In this new office, although as abstemious as ever, St. Edmund discharged, in a princely manner, all the duties of hospitality. His table was covered with delicate viands; but he himself was satisfied with such a kind of salt fish as quickly removed all desire for more. Those that would see some little embodiment of his sweet but richly-gifted spirit, will not be altogether disappointed in his brief treatise, called the "Church's Mirror." †

Sad, indeed, was the prospect that on all sides met the gaze of the new archbishop. From the beginning of the century there had been scarcely a single year without war or rebellion. There was now, it is true, no such tyrant as John, and the French had long since returned home; but a vacillating king, now harsh, now weak to excess, guided not by his own will, nor by the constitution, but by favourites, is often as trying to his subjects as a resolute inexorable tyrant. Hubert's fall was the occasion of Des Roches' restoration to place and favour. Instead, however, of learning moderation from his own or from Hubert's disgrace, Des Roches imitated Hubert's exclusion of the nobles from their legitimate influence in the royal counsels.

* Life of St. Edm. in the Bolland. and Trivet, an. 1232 and 1240. Trivet was, probably, not born until 1258. He himself being a Dominican, and his voucher being, as he assures us, one of those Dominicans that were in the habit of attending St. Edmund, his account has the full value of a contemporary.

† His "*Speculum Ecclesiæ*" is to be found in the Bib. Max. Patr. tom. xxv. p. 316.

When the latter expressed their dissatisfaction, bands of Poictevin mercenaries, who had already been stationed in the royal fortresses, were let loose upon the lands of the discontented. The earl marshal had already expostulated to the king's face, as a peer lawfully may. Another, still bolder, went to demand back his castle; but was there and then called a traitor. It was plain that blood was soon to flow. When now the barons began to confederate more closely, and a plan to seize the earl marshal had been defeated by his sudden flight to Wales, their estates were laid waste with fire and sword.

The bishops, meantime, in a council at Westminster endeavoured to appease the king, and secure a reconciliation, calling his attention especially to the unwarrantable fact that barons were in exile without having been tried by their peers (A.D. 1233). Des Roches, having here interposed with an ill-timed remark about the customs of France, the bishops, with one voice, exclaimed that they would excommunicate by name the chief of the king's evil counsellors. Nor did they leave the royal presence before they had executed their threat, including Des Roches himself.

Scarcely had they done so, when news came that the earl marshal had wrung one of his castles from the royal grasp. Henry, greatly excited, called upon the bishops to excommunicate the earl. They said there was no occasion for such an act: the castle belonged to the earl.

The king, however, called out the whole strength of the kingdom, and hurrying towards Hereford, lost a considerable part of his army in a night attack: his own safety was owing to his mercenaries. All the valley of the Wye as far as the south of Monmouth now rang with the incessant strife. The flame spread to the Severn, and Shrewsbury was pillaged and burnt, while the king, with exhausted strength, lay idle at Gloucester, and finally withdrew to Winchester (A.D. 1234).

Such was the state of England when St. Edmund was elected. He made it almost his first object to

solicit the king, in conjunction with many of his suffragan bishops, to give peace to the wretched country. "My lord," they said, "the counsels which you are following, those of Des Roches and his nephew Peter Rivallis, are neither wholesome nor safe, but cruel and perilous to you and your kingdom." The same counsels, they added, caused John the loss of Normandy, brought upon him the interdict, and involved him in those troubles that led to his premature death. "The same counsels obliged you yourself to besiege Bedford Castle; and have engaged you now in a ruinous war, which would never have been waged, had you ruled your men with justice and upright judgment. As it is, your treasure, your garrisons, your escheats, your wards, are all in the hands of these men. Your own seal or command, without that of Peter de Rivallis, is almost worthless. It is plain that they do not hold you to be king; that you are rather in their power than in your own. The law of the land, moreover, sworn to, as it has been, and confirmed by penalty of excommunication, they have so contemned and trampled upon, that it is to be feared that they have actually incurred that excommunication; and you yourself no less, by holding intercourse with them. Unless you quickly amend all, we will only await the consecration of our venerable father of Canterbury, and will then pronounce the censures of the Church against you, and all others that refuse to obey." *

This manly reproof had immediate effect. Henry was well meaning, but inexperienced and weak. All that he now requested was merely time to make the obnoxious ministers give an account of the royal treasures.

Scarcely was St. Edmund consecrated, when he again presented himself before Henry. The king listened humbly to a repetition of the strong lecture which he had already heard. He made no excuse, but acknowledged his fault, dismissed Des Roches

* Wend. 1234, t. iv. pp. 295, 296.

and the Poictevin mercenaries, and reinstated the dispossessed barons, and amongst the rest Hubert de Burgh, who had made his escape to Wales. The news which now arrived of the earl marshal's fate struck the repentant king with remorse : that injured but fiery baron had carried the war into Ireland, and was there mortally wounded. When Henry heard this, and with it St. Edmund's admonition to search his own conscience regarding the marshal's death, he burst into tears before his whole council, declaring that no one living was the earl's equal. He then called his chaplains, and having ordered a solemn mass for his soul, attended it himself, and as soon as it was finished, gave abundant alms to the poor. Thus closed the second administration of the able but reckless Des Roches.*

* Wend. an. 1234 and 1235 ; Paris.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

GROSTÊTE MADE BISHOP OF LINCOLN—HIS ZEAL—HIS DIFFICULTIES
—TRIALS AND DEATH OF ST. EDMUND—GROSTÊTE'S CONTINUED
LABOURS—HIS LOVE OF THE FRIARS—HIS CHAPTER'S APPEAL TO
ROME—REBUKES THE KING FOR PRESUMPTION.

AMONGST those suffragans whom St. Edmund consecrated, was one as firm as the saint himself, but the reverse of his primate in the more prominent points of character; one who being by birth of the dregs of the Suffolk people, yet by learning, virtue, and ability, was elevated by degrees to the episcopal see of Lincoln.* This was Robert Greathead, or Grostête. If energetic zeal could have scattered the many evils that were brooding over the Church in England, Grostête's rule must have been completely successful.

While as yet only bishop elect, Grostête displayed his perhaps too fiery zeal for discipline. A monk, on one occasion, "presented to him for the cure of souls, a deacon who bore no tonsure, and who, contrary to the canons, was dressed in red; and had, in short, the appearance of a knight rather than that of a deacon." Grostête put some questions to this unpromising ecclesiastic. The answers suited the man's costume more than they did his profession. The bishop elect restrained his indignation no longer. Turning to the monk, he exclaimed: "From your vow of perfection you are bound to die for the salvation of souls; with what face then do you present a man who is rather a slayer, than a healer of souls? For each soul Christ gave not a part, but the whole of his blood; not a part, but the whole of his life. You would betray a soul thus dearly purchased; you, who

* Trivet, an. 1253.

would not give to a destroyer a sheep worth twelve pence. Are you not evidently, by such contempt of Christ and of the price of his blood, on the road to hell?" *

The applicants withdrew, but not humbled and abashed as they ought to have been. They made this just but sharp rebuke a subject of complaint, the former persisting in his presentation, and the latter in his contempt of the canons. Grostête's friends wrote to him in terms of reproof. His reply was characteristic: "Was I in silence and unmoved," he wrote back, "to witness the death of souls for which I am bound to give my life? The deacon was guilty of public disobedience: St. Paul says, 'Them that sin, reprove before all, that the rest also may have fear.' His fault tended to the peril of souls: ought then my

* Ep. 11 ap. Browne's *Fascicul. t. ii. p. 311.* This "*Fasciculus*" is a curious specimen of a certain class of historical, or rather semi-controversial collections. Its contents are very miscellaneous, and the margin of its closely-printed leaves is diversified with a number of hands pointing, enough to astonish a modern printer. There is, however, a bond of unity; and there is but one object to which all these grisly fingers point: the bond of unity, as evinced by the choice of subjects and the tone of the editor's ever-accompanying remarks, is undisguised hostility towards the Catholic Church, and the Chair of St. Peter in particular; whilst the object towards which the fingers so incessantly point is some imagined proof of evil in the Church. Why, if this writer were to have edited the New Testament, he would have put one of his fingers opposite the declaration of Christ:—"Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil." He would have put another of his fingers opposite the contest of the Apostles about which should be greater; another opposite Peter's denial; another for Saul's persecution; another for Simon Magus; another for Ananias and Sapphira; another for the scandals of the Church of Corinth, or the dissensions of the Galatians; or the bishops animadverted upon in the beginning of the Apocalypse; nay, he would undoubtedly (being thoroughly consistent) have thrust in his fingers where the kingdom of heaven is likened to a net containing all kinds of fish, both good and bad.

In a word, where the writers to whose passages he thus calls attention are not Catholics, no one can be surprised at their language; where they are Catholics, the passages, with very few exceptions, are, in substance, in the mouths of all zealous Catholic bishops of all ages, from the days of St. Paul and St. Cyprian to those of St. Charles Borromeo, St. Pius V., and Pius IX.

correction to have been gentle? St. Paul says, 'Wherefore, rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.' God is my witness, the rebuke sprung from my love of their salvation. They love not the sheep, but the fleece. They make darkness light and light darkness. If they were true lovers of Jesus Christ, they would not have blamed my reproof, but would have joined me in it."

As he toiled on in his episcopal duties, evils arose that required immediate repression, and yet often baffled repeated efforts to uproot them. The carousals known as "Scot Ales," the "Feast of Fools" which on the feast of the Circumcision thrust itself into his very cathedral, and various over-boisterous games that disturbed the Sundays and sometimes took possession of the churchyards, were all peremptorily interdicted. These, however, were trifles when compared with others. The crown, for instance, would sometimes despatch a commission to some cleric, or even abbot, to appoint him an itinerant judge. This being against the canons, Grostête never failed to oppose it. He was very soon, therefore, pointed at as an enemy of the crown and of the royal dignity.*

He turned for help to St. Edmund, the meek archbishop of Canterbury; but the saint was involved in difficulties inextricable. The vacillating Henry had learned nothing from the result of his blind subserviency to Hubert de Burgh and Peter des Roches. He was now equally subservient to the relatives of his queen, and thus produced another series of plots and calamities.

The earl marshal, whose death in Ireland Henry had both caused and lamented, had married the king's sister, Eleanor. The widow, with the cognizance of St. Edmund, made a vow of chastity; but, if we are to believe Henry himself when expelling the earl Simon de Montfort from his court, she had allowed herself to be seduced by the earl. To

* Browne's Fascic. ii. Grost. Ep. 27, &c. pp. 326, 327, 328, 362; and 314, 331.

throw a veil over her disgrace, the king announced publicly that he was about to marry her to De Montfort. St. Edmund, apparently ignorant of his motive, was horror-struck; and rebuking the king, resisted to the utmost. The marriage, however, took place in the king's private chapel; and De Montfort immediately sought and procured the Pope's dispensation.*

Great confusion arose from this unhappy marriage. Many took scandal at the Pope's dispensation, instead of taking it for granted that he might have had reasons of which they were ignorant. Others, such as the great barons, considering the matter in its political bearings only, were greatly indignant that the king, without their consent and contrary to his oath, should dispose of any of the royal family in marriage. This feeling embittered another which had long been rankling,—their jealousy of the relatives of his queen, Eleanor of Provence. They flew to arms, headed by the king's own brother, Richard of Cornwall. Montfort's prompt measures to allay Richard's anger so completely succeeded, however, that the barons, deserted by their leader, returned home in disgust. The king's quarrel with De Montfort in the following year, and his public disclosure, or at least assertion, of what had led to the marriage, made the earl ready to lead them on in a second and more successful revolt.

During this complication of affairs St. Edmund found it his duty again and again to resist the king's tyranny over the Church, and especially his custom of hindering the elections to vacant sees and abbeys.

Unable to procure redress and finding patience useless, the archbishop, by the advice of his suffragans, personally admonished the thoughtless king. The monarch promised; and the archbishop mistakenly, it seems, thought it best to have patience even yet. Years passed by; and now, at length, fully aroused, the archbishop summons the faithful, and pronounces

* Matt. Par. an. 1238 and 1239, p. 498, &c.

anathema against the oppressors of the Church, and especially the king.*

Instead of submission, the man of God found only a multitude of delays and subterfuges. He withdrew from a struggle so unavailing, to the Cistercian monastery of Pontigny, and then, for change of air, to Soisi, where he died the death of the just (A.D. 1240).

If the conduct of so weak a monarch as Henry could be a proof of anything, his grief for the death of St. Edmund, and his constant veneration ever after for his memory, shows how inestimable must have been the character of one who could thus retain the affection of a king whom he had again and again reprovèd, and, at last, excommunicated.† Not altogether disheartened by the failure of his archbishop, Grostête continued his unremitting exertions for the salvation of his people. His diocese was the most extensive in England, and was thickly peopled.

Burning for the salvation of this innumerable flock, he sought those fervent preachers, those sweet and prudent confessors, who, being by their very profession beggars for Christ's sake, had filled all Europe with their renown for the only true nobility, that of holiness; he turned for aid to the Dominicans and Franciscans.

He could find no terms more moving, when he wrote to the prior-general of the Dominicans, than to appeal

* Vita Sti. Ed. c. liv. &c. Matthew of Paris adds to the causes of the saint's exile, his unavailing opposition to a subsidy for the Pope; but the saint's own chamberlain, a diffuse but accurate writer, would not have failed to mention this amongst the other causes. Even without such a reason, the monk of St. Alban's is, at best, a treacherous informant. The sum of the grievances stated by St. Edmund's chamberlain is, that "the powerful men of the land afflicted him on all sides, and that the brethren of his own church indiscreetly brought other contests upon him."—(Vita, ad fin.) The brethren alluded to were either the monks whose appeals against St. Edmund the same biographer mentions, or some of the bishops who resisted his attempt to make a visitation of the diocese of London.—See Grostête's Ep. in Fasciculus, tom. ii. p. 360.

† Matt. Paris, an. 1246 (p. 718), 1247 (p. 733), and 1252 (p. 872).

to his love for Christ crucified, and for his sorrowing Mother: "We entreat and adjure you by the sprinkling of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the conjoint sorrows of His most sweet Mother, who was transfixed as she stood by Him when He hung upon the cross." In the very same words he wrote for assistance to the general [superior?] of the Friars Minor.* He afterwards obtained from the Holy See permission for two Dominicans to live under his own roof for his more especial assistance.† To visit every part of his diocese, in order both to preach in person and to discover and remedy its evils, was, as Grostête repeatedly observes in his letters, the part of a zealous bishop. Whilst occupied in the execution of this duty, he was unexpectedly confronted by his own chapter. He wished to make a canonical visitation of his canons. They, however, demurred. From the foundation of their church, they were liable, they pleaded, to the scrutiny of no one but the dean, unless the dean became incapacitated (A.D. 1241).

Formerly, Dorchester, in Oxfordshire, was the cathedral city. Its decay, as well as its position at one extremity of the diocese, made it desirable to remove the cathedral. When, therefore, Rufus was preparing to atone for the destruction of many churches whilst making his new forest, he was advised to build a cathedral at Lincoln. This being done, two cardinal legates, eight archbishops, and sixteen bishops, assembled to arrange, by apostolical authority, its body of secular canons and their privileges, as well as all the other usual and canonical administration of the episcopal church.

It was to this arrangement that the canons now appealed, when Grostête wished to make his visitation. Their dean, they said, was not negligent; and unless he were, the bishop could not interfere. The dean

* Compare the two epistles (40 and 41) in Browne's Fasc. t. ii. p. 334: "Et copiosâ plebis multitudine nostra diœcesis quâlibet aliâ in regno Angliæ constitutâ multo latior est," &c.

† Ib. p. 378.

and others, after various negotiations, excessively prolonged by Henry's interference, were finally excommunicated. They appealed to Rome. Grostête, on the day appointed by him, proceeded to his cathedral; but not one of the officials was present. While the canons and their subordinates were thus unanimous, they were encouraged, it would appear, by the support of all the chapters of England. They had the audacity even to excommunicate the bishop's dean. The cause, however, was decided in favour of Grostête by a definitive sentence of the Holy See.*

Still toiling on, sometimes cautiously, sometimes perhaps rashly, but ever zealously, the energetic bishop came again, as in the lifetime of St. Edmund, into collision with the king.

Henry, hinting at his own prerogatives as an anointed king, wrote to him to present Robert Passelew, a cleric, but, at the same time, a forest justiciary, to the cure of St. Peter's Church, in Northampton. The bishop had often warned the cleric to show his obedience to the canons by resigning the office. There being no compliance, he firmly refused to present him. In human affairs, he replied, there are "two principles of rule, the priesthood and kingdom; of which one directs to eternal, and the other to temporal peace. Each of the two is a help to the other. The priestly power does not prevent the king from defending the republic with arms, or ruling it with just laws. The royal power, on the other hand, does not prevent that of the priesthood from working incessantly for the salvation of the flock, from distributing to it the bread of God's word, from displaying the examples of holy works, from assiduous devotedness to vigils, fasts, and prayers; duties which, as the Apostle testifies, cannot be discharged by those that entangle themselves in secular business. It would, therefore, be contrary to reason for the kingly power to entangle the priesthood in worldly concerns, instead of promoting its proper

* Ap. Fascic. tom. ii. pp. 352—361 and 374; Matt. Paris, A.D. 1241, 1245, pp. 572 and 688, &c.

objects. We, therefore, could not promote to the cure of souls a cleric who is discharging the office of a judge of the forest-pleas.

“If you speak of the royal anointing, it must be remembered that that signifies the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, given you to rule your people firmly, justly, and mercifully; and that it ‘by no means raised the royal power above, or even made it equal to, the priestly power.’ Ozias, the king of Judah, for attempting to extend his hand to some slight ministry of the priesthood, was struck with leprosy: ‘Usurping what was above him, he fell from what he was.’”*

* Ep. 124, ap. Browne, p. 393; and Ep. 126, p. 395.

CHAPTER XLIX.

A COUNCIL AT OXFORD IN THE VACANCY OF THE HOLY SEE—ANSWER OF FREDERICK II.—GROSTÊTE'S ZEAL FOR THE POPE, AND REPLY TO HENRY III.—A REMONSTRANCE GOT UP, AT THE KING'S DESIRE, FOR PRESENTATION TO THE POPE—ITS NATURE AND REAL ORIGIN—GROSTÊTE DEFEATED IN SEVERAL APPEALS TO ROME—HIS DECLARATION OF GRIEVANCES—REFUSAL TO PRESENT THE POPE'S NEPHEW—HIS DEATH—ST. RICHARD.

WHILE the English Church was still in the beginning of its sorrow for the loss of its saintly primate, St. Edmund, the aged but zealous Pope Gregory IX. had died broken-hearted at the calamities inflicted by Frederick II. (A.D. 1241).

Greatly moved at the sorrows of the Holy See, a council, consisting of the bishops of York, Lincoln, Norwich, and Carlisle, and of great numbers of ecclesiastics and religious, assembled at Oxford. Henry, now the brother-in-law of the emperor,* sent them word to beware of decreeing anything "against his crown and dignity." The bishops, however, knew how to "render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's." They listened to the messenger, and then continued their business. They decreed that, as the Church prayed without intermission for Peter when in prison, so throughout England there should be certain stated prayers, accompanied with fasting, that the Lord might console and renovate the Roman Church, now bereaved of the pastoral and papal rule. They also agreed to send messengers "with tearful supplications to the emperor, to entreat him, for the salvation of his soul, to repress rancour and all indignation of mind," and, "laying aside tyranny," not to impede the wel-

* The emperor Frederick II. had demanded and obtained his sister Isabel in marriage, in the year 1235 (Wendover).

fare of the Roman Church, but even, although irritated, to render it assistance.*

“Who impedes it? Not I,” was the emperor’s answer. “The pride of the Roman Church is obstinate,” he added; “its cupidity insatiable. If I were to impede not only the Roman but the English Church, which endeavours to hurl me from the imperial dignity, what wonder?” Thus fruitless was the effort of the English hierarchy.

Henry, meantime, wrote to Grostête to express his surprise that, notwithstanding the royal prohibition, the bishop had levied in behalf of the Pope a tallage upon his clergy and religious. Grostête wrote back that he had done nothing more than the other bishops, and that all of them had only obeyed the directions of the Pope’s nuncio, and “the authority and command of the most High Pontiff, to rebel against whom would be like the sin of witchcraft, and like the crime of idolatry to refuse to obey.” “What, therefore,” he continued, “our fellow-bishops and ourselves do in this matter is no subject for wonder; but exceedingly worthy of great wonder and of the utmost indignation would it be, if we were not to do this, or even more than this, without so much as a request or command. For we have seen our spiritual father, to whom we owe more honour and obedience than to earthly parents, persecuted, despoiled, and without the means of subsistence. If we do not assist them, we transgress the Lord’s commandment: ‘Honour thy father and thy mother.’ Your royal clemency, so far from impeding, will promote this loyalty of children towards their parents. Let your majesty be assured, that those persons who give you a different counsel do not look to the king’s honour. May your majesty be always well in the Lord.”†

Such is the close, and such the entire substance of this rejoinder, so well befitting a Briton, a Catholic,

* Wilk. i. p. 682.

† Ep. 119, ap. Browne’s Fasc. p. 390. See the king’s letter in Matt. of Paris, 1246, pp. 707 and 708.

and a bishop. The courage of Grostête was wanting however in that tempering sweetness without which it too often degenerates into rashness, and loses in enduring power what it appears to gain in its first intensity. At all events, when a public instrument, purporting to be the declaration of the suffragans of Canterbury, was sent to the Pope, Grostête, despite of his private remonstrance to Henry upon almost the same points, makes now no protest—remains silent. In the Council of Lyons (A.D. 1245) complaint had been made by the representatives of the English nobles, of the monies levied by Martin, the Pope's agent. Finding, after the close of the council, that no attention was paid to the remonstrance, the king laid before the Parliament a number of "grievances." These were the subsidies received from the clergy, and the suspension of advowsons by the Pope's "provisions." They were drawn up with the array of all the abuses to which they were ever liable; and when all that royal fear or favour could do, had been fully exerted, the bishops of the province of Canterbury, at the king's desire, wrote a formal letter of complaint to Pope Innocent IV. (A.D. 1246). In this instrument, against which none of them appears to have raised his voice, they acquainted him, that in a great council the king and his nobles, and almost all the people, complained bitterly of the "provisions" enforced against "their privilege and that of the crown;" that "many other grievances" were complained of; that the yoke was so oppressive that they declared they would rather die than allow such evils to spring up day after day. The bishops, in this declaration, asserted that they endeavoured, but to no purpose, to still the tumult. "These things are," they continued, "but the beginnings of sorrows; and will, we fear, be the nourishment of many evils in England. As this kingdom has always proved itself devoted to the Holy See, we beg of your Holiness to pacify the minds of the king and his brother, the earl of Cornwall, who show clearly that they are much offended,

and assert that the cause of the grievances mentioned was, that the favour of the Roman Church was *too strongly shown to the adverse party*.”*

The last words are, evidently, the key to the entire passage: the king was offended; the courtiers, being faithful mirrors, reflected the same feeling; and their attendants were not slow in imitating them. No wonder there was wrath and noise. But why was the king offended? Because the Pope was too favourable to the “adverse party.” What was this adverse party? No other certainly than that which opposed Frederick. The earl of Cornwall, on his return from the crusades in 1241, had been for four months the guest of the excommunicated emperor, and he it is that figures most prominently in this deed of remonstrance. So that all about the oppressive yoke, and beginnings of sorrows, were not facts, not the feelings of the nation, but merely a way of at once expressing the king’s displeasure, and holding out a vague threat in case of remaining on the adverse side (A.D. 1246). It is no wonder that the Pope once, in the course of the year, told the English envoys that their master spoke as the ally of Frederick.†

As far as regards the instrument thus presented, it must not be forgotten, that, after all, our knowledge of these transactions is too imperfect to justify a sweeping censure upon Grostête’s silence. Still there is something disappointing both in this and in what is known of other closing events of his life. If we can trust Paris, he pushed matters to extremity with the Templars, the monks, and the secular clergy; and having acted somewhat rashly, was defeated in their appeals to Rome. The troubles in which he thus became entangled may, perhaps, have embittered his mind. At all events, he took a prompt method of stating his dissatisfaction, passing with all the impetuosity of his character from facts to invective, and from the statements of an official witness to the conclusions

* Ap. Wilk. i. p. 694.

† Matt. Paris, an. 1246, p. 709.

of a judge and arbiter. Accompanied by Richard, archdeacon of Oxford, he was admitted to an audience with Innocent IV. and the cardinals (May, 1250). He presented several of the assessors with copies of a document which he had drawn up for the occasion. One of the cardinals immediately read aloud the copy with which he himself had been presented. It inveighed strongly against the want of zeal on the part of the clergy and the evils that resulted; against the court of Rome, for not remedying such evils, and for providing, by its "dispensations, provisions, and collations," pastors who devoured instead of defending the flock. Nor did it spare either the secular power, which, by prohibiting the oaths of lay witnesses, prevented inquiry into the sins of laymen; or lawyers, whose feigned appeals checked the ordinary course of ecclesiastical justice, and this, sometimes, for the express purpose of defeating the bishop's efforts to check and punish vice.*

This instrument, it must be added, breathes reverence even in its strongest passages, for the "most holy Popes," who "in a most especial manner bear the type and character and place of Christ," as well as for "this sacred see" "by its office the salvation of the whole world," and for the "supereminence and plenitude of its power." For, it continues, "to this end was it established over nations and kingdoms, that it may uproot from the will whatever is evil and erroneous, may scatter it, that it may not exist as a custom." †

Two years later, a complaint being made that the "provisions" took fifty thousand marks annually from England (A.D. 1252), Innocent, in reply, expressed his grief at the alleged affliction of the English Church, and referred, on the one hand, to the great necessity in which some of his clergy were placed by labours which had cost them their all; and, on the other, to the just title which those of his clergy had to English

* Browne's Fascic. t. ii. pp. 250—257. † Ib. pp. 251, 256, 257.

recompense, who were undergoing considerable cost and toil in the service of the English Church. This last he, who ought to be the most strenuous maintainer of justice, could not forego. He would, however, for the future, never exceed the sum of eight thousand marks.*

The following year was the last of Grostète's energetic life. It was signalized by one of his usual acts of vigour, which, as in many other events of his career, it is difficult, from the scantiness of contemporary details, to estimate aright. The Pope had presented his own nephew to a living in Grostète's diocese; but was met, it seems, with an unceremonious refusal. The bishop had taken it upon himself to decide that the person presented was unfit; and, therefore, wrote to Innocent, that the "provisions" were for "most manifest destruction," instead of edification, and that he was, therefore, not bound to obey.

How this answer was received, does not clearly appear. Paris, indeed, asserts, that had it not been for the entreaties of the cardinals, the Pope would have excommunicated him; but Paris was not very friendly to a bishop who had resolutely insisted on making the visitation of St. Alban's. Certain it is, that the Pope's bull which was then issued has no sign of indignation; but as was often done in order to prevent the frequent suspension of the same advowson, allowed the patrons of every living then held by foreigners, to present at once, and the persons so presented to take possession as soon as ever it became vacant (Nov. 3, 1253).†

* Ap. Wilk. i. p. 700.

† Brown's Fascic. ii. Ep. 128; Annals of Burton, 130; Matt. Paris, 1253; Annals of Laner.; Whart. ii. p. 341. These Annals say that Grostète was actually excommunicated; but remote as the writer was (Lanercost being in Cumberland), it is not likely that he was better informed than the Chronicler of St. Alban's, who took his place occasionally at the royal table. Nor, indeed, if such were the fact, would the dean and chapter of St. Paul's have applied to the Holy See, for Grostète's canonization, and that, too, without any allusion to the excommunication.—(See the chapter's letter to Clement V. in Whart. ii. p. 343, A.D. 1307.) If we may so far trust

In the same year in which Grostête died, the English Church was bereaved of another of its bishops, the patient St. Richard. This servant of God was a native of Worcestershire, being born of respectable, but poor parents, at Wych or Wike, so called from its salt springs, now Droitwich. When but a child, he showed a marked aversion for the dances, spectacles, and other diversions of the world. When his elder brother came of age, he was straitened by great want of means. The saint, therefore, with a true fraternal charity, made himself, for a considerable time, his brother's servant, becoming his waggoner, his ploughman, everything, in short, that one active youth could be. Touched with his generosity, his brother soon afterwards conferred upon him the whole of his inheritance. This, however, as well as the hand of a rich heiress, Richard made over to his brother, and then withdrew to the University of Oxford, and afterwards to that of Paris. After being made a professor at the former university, he studied canon law for seven years at Bologna. His master conceived such an affection for him, that he offered him his daughter in marriage; and all his lands and wealth. Richard's ambition, however, was of a higher kind: nothing earthly could satisfy it. He returned to Oxford; and, whilst leading there a poor and afflicted life, was elected chancellor. This was owing principally to the efforts of St. Edmund of Canterbury, and Grostête of Lincoln, who had discovered the merit of the humble student, and laboured (each unconscious of the other's purpose) to make his acquirements useful to the Church.

St. Edmund, at last, appointed him his own chancellor, confiding to him almost the entire care of his archdiocese.* He adhered faithfully to St. Edmund

the Lanercost chronicler, Grostête repented at his death of the mistaken haste with which he sometimes acted; he acknowledged himself guilty "regarding the churches," which "male ut homo deceptus erogavit."—Ap. Whart. ii. an. 1253.

* See the contemporary lives in the Boll. April, t. i. p. 279, &c. It is much to be lamented that dates are not given in these lives.

in his tribulations and exile. After his death he withdrew to a Dominican convent at Orleans. There he studied deeply the Holy Scriptures, not merely to know them but especially to reduce them to practice. Being ordained priest, he undertook the spiritual care of a parish. He was afterwards recalled to the chancellorship of Canterbury, by Boniface, St. Edmund's successor.

On the death of the bishop of Chichester, the canons having, "as usual," obtained the royal license, elected, in order to secure the king's favour, one of their body, the archdeacon of their church, who was attached as chaplain to the court. He was presented for the canonical examination to Boniface the archbishop elect and his suffragans. His qualifications were considered insufficient, and the election was annulled (A.D. 1246). St. Richard was now chosen with the unanimous consent of the bishops.

When the king found that his chaplain was thus discarded, and in his place, "a provision made" for the very man who had supported St. Edmund's resistance to himself, he yielded to an excess of passion, and punished "his enemy," as he termed St. Richard, by the confiscation of all the property of his see.*

After fruitless petitions and many insults, St. Richard appealed to Innocent IV., who, after hearing both sides, confirmed St. Richard's election, and consecrated him with his own hands. Henry, in open disobedience, refused to acquiesce; and not only kept the temporalities, but by proclamation forbade any one to do so much as aid the saint with a loan. Firm to his own trying duties, the saint went to his diocese, and lodging with one of his priests, Simon de Tering, a man according to the saint's own heart, he calmly discharged his various episcopal offices. That he might not appear to neglect his rights, he occasionally presented himself at court, and humbly solicited restitution. Repelled with insults, he kept his soul in

* Boll. April, t. i. p. 279.

patience. Seeing once that his canons were afflicted at this unworthy treatment, he said with a cheerful countenance, "Do you not understand what was written, 'The Apostles went out from the sight of the council, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ?' I assure you, by God's grace this tribulation is to me changed into joy." Thus did he suffer, cheerfully indeed, for two years.

When Innocent perceived the king's obstinacy, he commanded two bishops to warn him to restore within a fixed time, and under pain of public excommunication, the property of the church of Chichester. The king now yielded. The property, however, was in a wretched state; "ruinous and bare." Such was, indeed the too general condition of church property when released from the king's grasp. This should make the reader appreciate the royal remonstrance against "provisions," one ground of complaint being, that the buildings were allowed to fall into ruin.

When thus restored to his rights, St. Richard had much to suffer from injuries inflicted upon his church by the earl of Cornwall and other nobles. He punished them with excommunication. Such, however, was his love of charity, that when one of these men, the Lord Fitz-Alan, called upon him, without any intention of submitting, the bishop received him as if nothing unpleasant had occurred; telling him that he absolved him from the excommunication as long as he stayed in his house, but on his departure would withdraw the absolution until satisfaction was made.

His patience and charity never interfered with his heroic firmness. A certain cleric had seduced a nun, having induced her to leave her convent. He was, therefore, put under the ban of excommunication. He relied, however, upon powerful friends; and blushed not to appeal to the archbishop. The king himself, as well as many barons, and even some prelates, besought the removal of the sentence. Nothing, however, could shake the bishop's resolution: "Why," he replied, "the man actually at this moment keeps her as his concu-

bine." Smiting his breast, he cut short their unholy petition, by declaring that as long as his soul remained in his body, he would never consent, and never allow him to hold a benefice; and by bidding the archbishop to act in the case of the appeal, as he would wish to answer at the day of judgment.

He foretold the day of his death to Simon de Tering. Being taken ill while preaching a crusade, he poured out affectionate thanks to his crucified Lord, as, with a cross in his hands, he again and again kissed the sacred wounds. Often exclaiming, "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit," he commanded his chaplains to keep repeating the words of the divine office: "Mary, Mother of Grace, Mother of Mercy, protect us from the enemy, and receive us at the hour of death." Thus sweetly he died in the fifty-sixth year of his age.*

* BoH. April, t. i. pp. 280, 281, 295, &c.

CHAPTER L.

A PROVINCIAL COUNCIL AT LAMBETH—OPPRESSION OF ECCLESIASTICAL LIBERTY—MATTERS “PURELY SPIRITUAL”—GENERAL INTERFERENCE OF THE KING’S TRIBUNALS IN THE PRESENTATIONS OF THE BISHOPS, IN EXCOMMUNICATIONS, AND IN EXCLUDING CRIMINALS FROM THE AID OF THE SACRAMENTS.

EVER since the death of St. Edmund, the troubles of the country had continued to increase. The nobles in arms had compelled the king in the “Mad Parliament” at Oxford to resign his power into the hands of a committee or “Council of State.” Nothing satisfactory followed. The nation was disappointed, and the king resumed his authority. The affairs of the Church, meantime, continued gloomy. In a council at Lambeth, Boniface, the archbishop of Canterbury, who was the queen’s uncle,* together with his fellow-bishops,

* N. Trivet tells that he, foreigner though he was, was made archbishop by the king’s influence just after the Council of Lyons, and after Henry had expelled from a living one of the Pope’s relatives for being a foreigner.—(N. Tr. an. 1245.) Although Trivet was not born until 1258, his known carefulness guarantees his statement. Simon de Montford was now the chief leader of the barons. He had been, if we may believe Rishanger, urged by Grostête “to espouse, for the remission of his sins, that cause for which he fought to the death.” Rishanger himself could not have been more than three years old at the time of Grostête’s death. His statement, however, rests, he tells us, upon the testimony of trustworthy men. If even this be true, the bishop could only have encouraged his resistance to the king’s misrule as far as previous facts were concerned. How far, had he lived, he might have sanctioned his seizing upon the reins of government, is another question.—(See “Barons’ Wars,” Camd. Soc. p. 7.) It is sometimes asserted that writers in the middle ages followed one another without using their own judgment. More than once in these pages this has been proved to be incorrect. Certain is it, that their estimate of Montford’s acts and character is widely different. He is with some the upholder of the rights of the people; with others (Rishanger, for instance), the champion both of the

bewailed the violence by which "ecclesiastical liberty in England is oppressed and trampled under foot" (A.D. 1261). Like Israel in the slavery of Egypt was that Church which Christ had purchased by his blood. Petitions for redress were unheeded. It was necessary to be silent no longer, but against the attempts of their adversaries to have recourse to the word of God, which is more penetrating than a two-edged sword.

Christ sent, to gather in his harvest, not the kings and princes of this world, but those who by faith are the conquerors of kings,—the Apostles. Charity is growing cold; and with grief we see that the rights of holy Church are violated, although they are both divine and canonical, and have been, moreover, guaranteed by the charters and concessions of kings and princes. Such conduct is not advantageous to the king; and as it imperils both his salvation and ours, we must speak, cost what it may, and apply a due remedy.

If, then, from this day forward, any archbishop or bishop be summoned by the king's letter to appear before a secular tribunal to give an account of things relating merely to his own office, and to the ecclesiastical court, as in times past has been done by usurpation, we command such person, thus summoned, not to attend. The matters purely spiritual to which we refer, are such as the following: if a prelate be summoned to answer in the secular court for having admitted or not admitted clergy to churches or chapels, for having excommunicated, suspended, or interdicted those under his own jurisdiction, or for having dedicated churches, or conferred orders; also for tythes,

Commons and the Church; and with others, again, a successful rebel and usurper.

Rishanger, quoted above, was a monk of St. Alban's, who succeeded Matthew of Paris and other monks as "the king's historiographer." Most of his works have perished. Even his "Barons' Wars" has only come to us from a single manuscript so badly written, that Halliwell, the editor for the Camden Society, will not always vouch, not only for the chronological sequence of facts, but even for "the sense of the author."—*Introd.* p. xxiv.

offerings, limits of parishes ; also of whatever such a person, thus summoned, may know of the sins and excesses of those that are under his jurisdiction ; and also for the usual causes in the ecclesiastical courts between clergy and clergy, or clergy and laity.

To give due honour, however, to the king, let the greater prelates inform him, either by word of mouth or in writing, of the reason of this, the invasion of ecclesiastical liberty. If the king say that the question is not about tythes, but about the right of patronage ; not about perjury, but chattels ; not about sacrilege, or the subversion of ecclesiastical liberty, but the faults of his bailiffs ; then let the prelates inform him that they do not take cognizance, nor intend to take cognizance, of that right of patronage which the king *de facto* exercises, nor of the chattels and other matters which belong to his own tribunal ; but of tythes, sins, and other matters purely spiritual, and belonging to their office and jurisdiction, and the salvation of souls. On these matters, let the prelates warn the king, once and again, to desist, and provide for his own salvation. If the king do not desist, let the archbishop, or, in his absence, the bishop of London, “ as dean of the bishops,” take two or three other bishops, and admonish the king in person. If, notwithstanding this, the royal officers proceed against the person summoned, let them be coerced by suspension and excommunication. If the officers persist, let their lands within the diocese of Canterbury, and the places where they dwell, be put under an interdict. Let the same sentence, in due course, fall upon all the royal castles and lands ; and, lastly, if the king remained obstinate, upon all the dioceses of the province of Canterbury.

Let any clergyman who shall, by lay power, and without ecclesiastical authority, thrust himself into any ecclesiastical office or benefice, forfeit what he has thus invaded, and be publicly denounced by the diocesan as being excommunicated.

Let the rights of the clergy be respected. When

charged with any violation of law, let them, as usual, be brought before the ecclesiastical tribunal. Remedies were prescribed at the same time for many other evils; for the forcible occupation of the houses and "hospices" of the clergy, the expulsion of their servants, and the unjust sale of their goods; for the waste and dilapidation of ecclesiastical property when churches were in the royal custody; and for the refusal made to the imprisoned, of approaching the sacrament of penance.*

These regulations speak for themselves. All laws, whether ecclesiastical or secular, presuppose, with very rare exceptions, a considerable number of facts against which they are directed. A little consideration upon the decrees just given, will afford a true but sad insight into the state of the Church in England. To two only of these decrees is it worth while to call attention. One is the fact, that a Catholic king, holding confession to be the only ordinary means of forgiveness of sins, should dare to forbid it, or suffer his officials to forbid it, to poor criminals. Could anything show more clearly the reckless nature of the royal encroachments upon the Church's freedom? The other decree is that which regards the invasion by the "lay power" of the right of patronage. This invasion was the act of the same men, Henry and his imitators, who, a few years before, had complained so loudly of the Pope's "Provisions." Put these matters together, and add the various invasions of the right of patronage attempted by the king and narrated in these pages, and it will be manifest, on the one side, that it was not from real indignation at an infringement of this right, that so much hubbub had been made against the Holy See, and, on the other, that this hubbub, caused in part for the sake of the king's brother-in-law, Frederick, was caused no less by the crown's attempting, without any even alleged reason, to challenge to itself the whole right of patronage in all the more important benefices.

* Ap. Wilk. tom. i. pp. 746—755.

This was the meaning of what was called, so often, the privilege of the crown. It was only another name for one of the "customs," and one that most directly aimed at the enslaving of the Church. The struggle that began with William Rufus was renewed with each successive king, almost without exception, until the blood of martyrs, under Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, told that the war was now indeed undisguised. Would that that blood had flowed earlier! A few more of the heroic stamp of St. Thomas of Canterbury, and perhaps England would have remained faithful to its first conversion.

CHAPTER LI.

A GENERAL REVOLT—THE KING TAKEN PRISONER AT THE BATTLE OF LEWES—A LEGATE SENT TO MAKE PEACE—HIS FAILURE AND RETURN—DEATH OF LEICESTER—ARRIVAL OF OTTOBONI, THE CARDINAL LEGATE—SUSPENSION OF FOUR BISHOPS—DECREE AGAINST PLURALITIES—CASE OF FRUITLESS APPEAL—CONSECRATION OF THE CHURCH OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY—PREPARATIONS FOR ANOTHER CRUSADE—ATTEMPT OF PRINCE EDWARD TO OVERAWE THE ELECTORS TO THE SEE OF CANTERBURY.

THE attention of men was now suddenly called from the decrees of synods, and from every other peaceful occupation, to a violent conflict which, in a few weeks, completely overturned the throne. The bickerings so incessantly recurring between the king and the barons, had prepared the way for the most desperate measures. Montford, the earl of Leicester, organized a general insurrection; and soon the whole country, from the Humber to the English Channel, became one wide scene of tumult. While the Londoners were sallying forth to destroy the royal palace at Westminster, or to riot in the pillage of some neighbouring township, or, in their own streets, were butchering and plundering the helpless and unoffending Jews, the king's army was sacking the town of Northampton, or visiting the lands of his opponents with fire and sword all the way from Northampton to Nottingham. Flushed with success, the king then led his troops to the south, and forced Leicester to raise the siege of Rochester. His movements terminated abruptly on the field of Lewes: he himself, his brother, the earl of Cornwall, and Henry's valiant son, Prince Edward, after a vigorous contest, became the captives of the insurgents (A.D. 1264). The warriors that guarded the marches of Wales flew to arms in the king's

behalf, but, after a brief success, were compelled to give hostages.*

Moved with compassion at this scene of tumult, and at the king's captivity, Pope Urban sent Guido, the cardinal bishop of Sabina, to restore peace, and to obtain the release of the prisoners. When he reached the north of France, he received a message from the earl and his associates, threatening him with death if he ventured to cross the Channel. In conjunction with the archbishop of Canterbury, who was one of the numerous exiles lately driven from England, he now cited the bishops, especially those who were the partisans of Leicester, the bishops of London, Winchester, Worcester, and Chichester, to appear in person before him. They pleaded inability to come, the barons having (though it was said at the request of the bishops themselves) interdicted them the means of transport. Indignant at so transparent an artifice, the legate pronounced against the prelates sentence of excommunication. The bishops, at first, appealed against his sentence to the Holy See; but, at last, those of London, Winchester, and Worcester, made their appearance. They were accompanied by the justiciary and other barons. The legate, nothing daunted by the presence of the nobles, required the bishops to return and excommunicate the earl and his sons, and all their abettors; and to put his confederate towns, London, Gloucester, and the Cinque Ports, under an interdict. They consented. They even took an oath to obey, and bore with them the papal rescript. On their voyage home, they were boarded and seized, no doubt on a secret understanding, by the mariners of the Cinque Ports, and the rescript was torn to fragments and cast upon the waves. The bishops landed, and were no longer prisoners, but instead of pronouncing the sentence, they appealed against it. Seeing that it was useless to make any further effort, the legate returned to Rome.† He was,

* Trivet, Wikes, Rishanger, an. 1264.

† Wikes, Rishanger, p. 39, ed. Camden Soc.

almost immediately, elected Pope ; taking the name of Clement IV. He had once been a married man, being an advocate, and one of the French king's counsellors. He was so devoted to watchings, prayer, and fasting, that it is believed, adds Trivet, that God "through his merits put an end to the troubles which had so long afflicted the Church."*

The country, meantime, although completely under the sway of Leicester, was suffering from the general interruption of business ; yet soon began to discern, in the movements of the Welsh marchers and the increasing coldness between Leicester and Gloucester, the evident symptoms of a new and more furious contest (March, 1265). Aided by Gloucester, Edward made his escape, and soon found himself at the head of a large army, and, baffling Leicester's attempt to unite with Simon, his eldest son, who was shut up in Kenilworth Castle, attacked and slew him in the bloody fight of Evesham (Aug. 5, 1265). In this battle Henry was obliged to fight in Leicester's ranks, and was rescued from imminent death by his son Edward. After a few sieges and struggles, and occasional disturbances from powerful outlaws, the country subsided, once more, into a settled peace.

In the year after the battle of Evesham, and whilst the country was still in the wildest confusion, Cardinal Ottoboni arrived as legate from the Holy See. As the queen had landed only the day before, the court was still at Dover. Henry, therefore, as well as the prince, the king of the Romans, as the earl of Cornwall was now termed, and a vast concourse of earls, barons, abbots, and other illustrious personages, went out to meet the legate, and escorted him to the cathedral of Canterbury ; and "the bells resounding for joy," says Wikes, "the whole city was in exultation" (A.D. 1266).

Some weeks after, in obedience to a rescript from the Holy See, the legate summoned the bishops of London and Chichester to appear before him ; and in

* Anno 1268.

a synod at Northampton, in presence of a vast multitude, published the rescript; suspended the two bishops, as well as those of Worcester and Winchester; and commanded them to appear before the Pope, within three months, under pain of deposition. The bishop of Worcester died either at the time of the synod or immediately after; and the bishop of Winchester, having joined in the pilgrimage of his brothers of London and Chichester, died at Rome.*

After having for many months exerted himself to renovate general discipline, Ottoboni held, at length, the synod of London in the vast cathedral of old St. Paul's (April 16, 1268). After having confirmed the decrees of his predecessor Otho, he added the penalty of deprivation against pluralists or those who, without a lawful dispensation, held more than one benefice.

This law did not remain a dead letter. In 1279, for instance, Richard de la More being unanimously elected to the see of Winchester, was, nevertheless, refused institution by Kilwardby, the archbishop of Canterbury, because, without a dispensation, he was in possession of two benefices. He defended himself on the ground that his benefices were "mute," not having the care of souls attached. Finding that this made no impression upon the archbishop, he appealed to Rome, but only to obtain a confirmation of the archbishop's decision.†

Meantime, before the last decisive struggles, the sieges of London and of the isle of Ely, the king's resources had been so entirely exhausted, that were it not for the riches of his brother, the king of the Romans, for the liberal supplies of food given by John Basset and other rich men, and still more for a tythe paid by the Church at the Pope's injunction, the contest, to all appearance, must have been abandoned.‡

* Wikes, an. 1265, &c. pp. 73, 74, and 85; and compare Trivet.

† Wikes, ad an. pp. 84 and 109.

‡ Wikes and Triv. an. 1265, 1266, 1267, pp. 74 and 85, ap. Gale;

The tythe, however, seems, from a document in Wilkins, to have been intended partly, if not entirely, for the crusades. It may also have been intended to aid in the erection of the present church of Westminster Abbey. If not, it is difficult to explain how Henry could find resources enough to build an edifice avowedly intended to surpass all the churches of the age.

Scarcely had Ottoboni completed his important duties in England, when this masterpiece of architecture was finished and consecrated. This abbey, together with the adjoining parish of St. Margaret's, had long been free from the jurisdiction of the bishop of London. The latter had, indeed, contested this privilege; but, in 1222, when the question had been referred to the arbitration of Langton and the bishops of Winchester and Salisbury, it was decided that the abbot was right, being accountable for the care of souls only to God and the Roman Church. The new edifice contained a magnificent shrine of gold and precious stones for the body of St. Edward the Confessor. The king assembled, on the Feast of the Dedication, all the prelates and nobles, and the chief men of "all the cities and boroughs of the kingdom." The relics of the holy confessor were borne by Henry himself, his brother, the king of the Romans, the princes Edward and Edmund, Warrenne, earl of Surrey and Sussex, Philip Basset, and as many others of the highest nobles as could put their shoulders, or at least their hands, beneath the venerated burthen. The monks, on the same day, celebrated the divine mysteries for the first time in the new building. The

and compare Trivet, an. 1265, 1266, &c. During the confusion of the second revolt of the Londoners, whilst the royal army was beleaguering the walls, and the populace within were seeking out, butchering, and throwing into the Thames the king's adherents, the legate took refuge in the Tower. Gloucester attacked this fortress from the city, while the besieging army entered it by a postern-gate from the fields, and rescuing the legate, beat off the assault of Gloucester and the Londoners.—(Wikes.)

day was closed by a splendid banquet in the adjoining palace.*

When the dedication was over, men turned all their attention to a new crusade, which Ottoboni had been preaching, and for which the more devout, or warlike, or restless spirits of the country were now making rapid preparation. The parliament, full of zeal for the cause, voted the king a twentieth of all the moveables of the kingdom. The greater part of this subsidy was to be intrusted to Prince Edward.†

When Edward had arranged with St. Louis the plan of the crusade, and was collecting his fleet at Portsmouth, he heard that Boniface, the charitable, simple-minded, but somewhat lavish, and not deeply learned archbishop of Canterbury, was dead, and immediately gave an additional proof that he too, like his fathers, had little respect for the freedom of the Church (A.D. 1270). Knowing that the monks had obtained the royal license to elect a new archbishop, he hurried to Canterbury, to secure by his presence the election of a clergyman whom he greatly loved. The monks, however, nobly vindicated their right to

* Ap. Wilk. i. p. 598; Wikes, 1268, 1269; Ann. Wav. ib.

† In all money matters, Wikes (a canon regular of Osney, who died about A.D. 1304) is a veritable Matthew of Paris: it is not a little ludicrous to hear his querulous statement of this transaction. The laity, who had laughed at the taxation of the clergy, were made to weep for their own loss. Their barns were emptied (Wikes had just before described in glowing terms the abundant harvest in A.D. 1267, saying nothing of bad harvests since), their cattle dead; yet the "royal cupidity" (or, as Wikes had it just before, the "canker-worm of avaricious extortion"), not content with the old, made a new and "true" valuation, and this not only of moveable, but immoveable property. Thus, what had been granted as a favour, was paid by compulsion; and, although the money collected was countless, the king's treasury was little the better, because "no small portion of the afore-said money had been properly assigned by the chiefs and prelates as a subsidy towards the Lord Edward's pilgrimage to the Holy Land."

Unless there has been a sad mutilating of the manuscript here, Wikes's judgment must have been fairly swept away by his wrathful feelings. His brain is usually turbid where taxes of any kind are mentioned; in other respects he is generally an impartial writer, affording much insight into the manners as well as the general events of his age.

freedom of election. If Edward thus began to overawe when only prince, what might he not attempt when anointed king. Whether it was such a thought that aroused them, or the remembrance of some acts of undue severity on the part of Boniface, whom Henry III. had almost forced upon them, or, still better, their own habitual looking up towards heaven which made them think little of princes; they unanimously chose Adam de Chelinden, their own prior.

Edward and his father immediately despatched messengers to Rome. Their active opposition so disheartened the archbishop elect, that he voluntarily resigned his dignity. The Pope, therefore, chose in his place Robert de Kilwardby, the "prior provincial" of the English Dominicans.*

* Wikes, an. 1270, p. 92; Ann. Wav.; Triv.; Contin. Flor. Wig. ii. an. 1270 and 1272. The author of the "Collect. Anglo-Minor." produces several comparatively modern authors to show that Robert was a Franciscan; the statement of Trivet, a contemporary and Dominican, is not conclusive; he merely says that Robert was provincial of "his brethren."

CHAPTER LII.

THE FIRST MORTMAIN ACTS: WERE THEY JUST?—HOW ELUDED—JOHN OF PECKHAM MADE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY BY THE HOLY SEE—HIS ZEAL AND LEARNING—COUNCIL AT LAMBETH—JOHN'S WRITTEN REMONSTRANCE TO THE KING—THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN AND THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD—ROBERT OF WINCHELSEY—WARS AND RAPACITY OF EDWARD—PILLAGES THE JEWS, THE MERCHANTS, AND THE CLERGY—PETITION OF CONVOCATION AGAINST THE "STATUTE OF MORTMAIN"—SEIZURE OF THE ALIEN PRIORIES—GENERAL OUTLAWRY OF THE CLERGY—FIRMNESS OF WINCHELSEY—HIS REMONSTRANCE—PUBLISHES THE POPE'S CENSURES AGAINST INVADERS OF CHURCH PROPERTY—MEANING OF THE POPE—NATIONAL INDIGNATION AT EDWARD'S TYRANNY—SCOTTISH AFFAIRS—CHARGE AGAINST WINCHELSEY.

WHEN Edward had returned from the Crusades, and had been crowned, his father being now no more, his attention was engrossed for nine years by endeavours to exact homage from the Welsh princes, and by the subsequent conquest of that mountainous region, which had so long held out alike against Saxon, Norman, and Plantagenet. When, almost immediately after his coronation (Aug. 1274), he had assembled a parliament to take his first measures in Welsh politics, a variety of laws, called the "Statutes of Westminster," were enacted, and amongst the rest, the first of the celebrated Mortmain Acts (A.D. 1275).*

It is greatly to be regretted that there is no document of this period so full of details as to lay bare the inner workings of society. As it is, we must be satisfied with a very indistinct outline of the causes and bearings of those enactments.

Any society, such as an independent nation, can, of course, regulate the tenure and transmission of land.

* Trivet, an. 1275.

This right, however, is limited. The supreme power in a state may not interfere with the rights of individuals, except for the common good; and then only by impartially fixing the new burthen or limitation as far as possible upon all. Whether the first Mortmain Act fulfilled these conditions may, perhaps, be doubted. This act forbade religious corporate bodies to receive, in future, any "possessions of lands or revenues without the special license" of the chief lord of the fief. Four years later (1279), lands thus granted were forfeited to the chief lord; if he neglected for one year to take possession, they fell to the Crown. When, in 1289, the sale of lands was made legal, provided the buyer held of the chief lord, corporate bodies were still excepted; the land, it was expressly stated, was not, even so, to "come into mortmain." *

Corporate bodies, whether religious or municipal, or of any other kind, are, or when Edward mounted the throne certainly were, the same in the eye of the law as individuals. They might bequeath, receive by will, buy, sell, in short act in every way as private individuals. The Acts of Mortmain limited this right. The same acts assigned as the reason for the limitation, the loss incurred by the chief lords, of the escheats and other feudal dues, attendant either upon the death of a vassal, or upon the reversion of the fief. If there were, indeed, such a loss, if it were an emolument to which they had a customary right, then could they justly limit the grant by demanding compensation. Such a right seems to have existed on the part of the chief lord. On the part of the heirs of the

* Trivet, *ib.*; Statutes of the Realm, 1. 7th Ed. I. (Nov. 15, 1279, also 1285, 1289, &c.) In 1285, a protest on the part of the bishops declared it "too severe and prejudicial to the Church, that if any revenue has been given as a pure, free, and perpetual alms, it shall revert to the donor, if, for some cause, no matter how lawful in itself, and how necessary, it has been alienated by those to whom it was given."—(Ap. Wilk. ii. p. 119.) In 1290, the Pope himself wrote to point out to Edward the grievous sin of contemning the canons and ancient usages of the Church. The appeal seems to have been fruitless.—*Ib.* p. 173.

grantor, it may be questioned. The proprietor who, acting according to law and equity, granted his land to a corporate body, granted at the same time his right to all feudal dues attached to such land. His heir had no right to complain, no entail as yet existing in law, and there being, it would seem, no other restraint upon a feudal lord's disposal of his property, but the natural right of his family to a becoming support, and the feudal rights of his own superior lord. The reason, then, assigned by the act—the loss to the heirs of the original grantor of various feudal dues—seems an insufficient reason for so sweeping a measure.

With regard to the chief lord, however, there is another and a more valid cause for at least a limitation. Fiefs, in some cases, as on the extinction of a family, reverted to the king as the chief lord. Such a reversion could never take place, if, in law phraseology, they “fell to a dead hand,” or corporate body. The Crown, therefore, had a right to exact a knowledge of such a transaction, and a compensation equivalent to its own probable loss. That, instead of such compensation, a special license should be made necessary, under pain of forfeiture, seems assuredly an unnecessary burthen; far more than an equivalent for the Crown's loss. That bodies corporate should not enjoy the benefit, extended to other individuals, of purchasing, seems an additional grievance. Abbots held of the Crown, and rendered it the usual feudal services, why then except them on such a pretence from the general benefit?

So the nation seemed to think, whatever the Parliament might enact; and the Crown, instead of a certain amount of unjust gain, lost everything. The way in which the first Mortmain Act was evaded was both simple and characteristic. Instead of an absolute grant, very long leases were given. This being perceived, a more stringent Mortmain Act was passed, that of 1279. The king's license was no longer to be looked for: all alienations in mortmain were abso-

lutely prohibited. A new means of evasion was, however, quickly discovered. If a proprietor wished to bestow a few acres upon a corporate body, the latter, by agreement with him, went to law for the property. It was easy for the intended donor to absent himself; and thus judgment would be given in favour of the corporate body, and its new possession be secured by the strongest of titles, the record of a court of law.*

It is time, however, to turn from these obscure and baffled laws to the progress of events. Robert of Kilwardby being made cardinal and bishop of Ostia, Robert Burnell, the bishop of Bath and Wells, was, at the king's pressing request, nominated to the vacant see (A.D. 1278). This nomination was, however, displeasing to the Pope, and was annulled. It is worthy of remark, that on a subsequent occasion, and again by royal influence (A.D. 1280), Burnell was chosen bishop of Winchester. The Holy See, however, had not found reason to change its opinion; and pointing out to the electors their indiscretion in thus presenting one whom they knew to be unacceptable, again cancelled his election.†

Soon after Burnell's first rejection, the Pope conferred the see of Canterbury upon John of Peckham, a Franciscan, who was then "lector" of the palace at Rome, and was well known, not only there, but also at the universities of Paris and Oxford, for his eloquence and profound learning ‡ (A.D. 1279).

The new archbishop retained all the fervour and simplicity of his order. He loved the poor, would never receive presents, and was devoted to vigils and prayer. If he were going to say mass, he himself would light the candles in his own cathedral.

Burning with zeal, he visited every part of his extensive province. Wherever he found abuses, he uprooted them, without regard even to the king's opposition. The royal chapels at Derby, Wolver-

* Comp. Stat. of the Realm, and Rymer, ad an.

† Ann. Wav. 1280.

‡ Trivet, an. 1279.

hampton, Stafford, Shrewsbury, and Tettenhall, claimed exemption from the archiepiscopal visitation. John demanded their charters; and as they had none to produce, compelled them to submit both to the visitation and to some penance for their resistance.*

His next object was to enforce the decrees of the late general council (the second of Lyons), as well as the constitutions of Otto and Ottoboni.† For these important objects, a council was summoned to Lambeth. Hearing of the summons, Edward cautioned the archbishop, and afterwards the synod itself, to remember their oath of fidelity, and beware of doing anything against the rights of the Crown, or their goods would be in peril.

Had such a menace been uttered to the House of Commons in the reign of James I. or Charles I., or at the present day, would it not be deemed an insult and a breach of privilege? Was it anything less when directed against the liberty of the Church? At least, it would surely be time enough to speak thus harshly when the royal prerogative was actually assailed.

Having assembled on the appointed day, the Council proceeded to business without taking any public notice of the king's menace. It lamented the decay of canonical obedience in England, and declared that if any decree of the recent Council of Lyons seemed irreconcilable with "the custom of this country," humble recourse must be made to the Apostolic See. Then turning to what regarded the instruction of all the faithful, the Council continued:—The Most High from earthly elements has made for mankind a medicine in seven vessels. These are the seven sacraments. These are often administered with too little reverence. 'Priests are many in number, but few in merit.' Let especial care be taken of the 'sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord.' Let the Eucharist, in which the Author of Life gives Himself as a viaticum to His Church, be preserved in a most beautiful

* Wadd. *Annales Minor.* 1279, Nos. 16, 17, and 25; Rome, 1733.

† Trivet, 1281.

tabernacle, and be wrapped in linen, and be renewed every Sunday. Let the faithful be carefully taught that under the form of bread they receive the body and blood of the Lord, Christ entire, the Living and True. Let them be taught, too, that the wine they receive is only wine, is merely to assist in more easily swallowing 'the sacred body : ' in 'the minor churches,' priests alone receive the blood under the appearances of consecrated wine.*

"The form of baptism, in case of danger arising, must be sedulously taught :—'I christen thee in the Father's name,' &c.†

"Let confessors beware of exceeding their faculties, and of presuming to stretch forth the hand of absolution over the excommunicated, and especially over the invaders of the liberties of the Church, or those that keep back the tythes or other ecclesiastical rights; or those that, despite of canonical prohibition, hold a plurality of benefices, or who take upon themselves to

* Ap. Wilk. ii. p. 50. To understand what is said about receiving unconsecrated wine, it may be observed, that when the Manicheans were striving to conceal their heresy by conforming externally to Catholic worship, Popes Leo and Gelasius, knowing that the heretics maintained that wine was created by the Evil Principle, made it a test, or means of detecting heretics, by commanding all the faithful to receive under both kinds. When the necessity for such a test began to cease, the discipline of receiving under both kinds began again to relax; and, at last, the custom mentioned in the text was adopted, being, indeed, in what is called the Greek Church from the earliest times, on such days as Good Friday and Holy Saturday, when all the faithful received under the form of bread alone, but in unconsecrated wine and water.

In the Latin part of the Church, the danger of spilling the sacred blood led, at first, to the practice of giving a particle dipped into the chalice to all lay communicants. The danger not being yet thoroughly obviated, unconsecrated wine was used, the faithful being cautioned that it was not consecrated. Even this last trace of giving under both kinds gradually disappeared; and finally, in horror of those heretics who said that for receiving the body and blood of Christ both species were necessary, the Council of Constance commanded all to receive under the form of bread alone.—(See Chardon's *Hist. des Sacr. : d'Euch. c. iv.*) When reading Chardon, it should be remembered that if he were not a Quesnellite, he was certainly one of the appellants against the bull "Unigenitus."

† "Ich cristin the in the Faderes name," &c.

hear confession under pretence of general privileges granted by the Pope, and in contempt of the Pope's authority." Some ample instructions follow upon the articles of faith and the Commandments, as well as various practical regulations.*

Soon after the breaking up of the council, the archbishop of Canterbury wrote a strong remonstrance to the king. We are commanded, he said, to honour the royal majesty; but we are also commanded to obey God rather than man. No human oath or constitution is a reason for violating the evident laws of God. Whatever opposes the will of God is unlawful: "Woe to those that make unjust laws." Since then, from ancient times, there has been a dissension regarding the liberties of the Church between the kings and nobles of England on one side, and the archbishops, bishops, and clergy on the other; we entreat you, for the honour of God and the salvation

* Wilk. ii. p. 51—61. It was apparently at the close of this synod that the archbishop's zeal led him, it seems, beyond the proper limits with regard to his suffragans. The question is involved in great obscurity; but it was considered of such importance, that St. Thomas of Hereford was chosen by the other bishops to carry their joint appeal to Rome. St. Thomas was eldest son of Baron Cantelupe, earl of Pembroke, &c. Before he became bishop, he was chancellor of the kingdom under Henry III. He had in vain endeavoured to free himself from the burthen; but succeeded under Edward I., on condition of attending the privy council. Being thus disengaged, he resumed his theological studies at Oxford, being afterwards chosen and consecrated bishop of Hereford. He was a resolute defender of his church against the king and some of the neighbouring barons. Having succeeded in his appeal against John of Peckham, he died before he could leave Tuscany, on his way home (A.D. 1282); "*viâ versus curiam*," says the generally accurate N. Trivet, but who seems clearly mistaken.—(See Bull of Canonization in 1320 &c.) The bones and the head and heart of the holy bishop were enshrined in his cathedral; but his head was soon after placed by his great admirer, Edmund, earl of Cornwall, in the monastery built by the earl at Ashbridge, in Buckinghamshire. Amongst the most earnest petitioners at the Holy See for his canonization was Edward I. himself (A.D. 1305), who appealed both to his personal knowledge of the saint and to innumerable miracles, which the king declared were a matter of public notoriety.—See his letter in Wilk. ii. p. 283; also Dugd. Monast. tom. vi. p. 514 (Bohn's ed.); and N. Triv. an. 1282.

of your own soul, to enable us to put an end to evils to which none can be put unless you, like the Catholic emperors, deign to submit to the decrees of the popes, the statutes of councils, and the sanctions of the orthodox Fathers. An enemy of the Church may perhaps say, that the Pope has no right to impose such laws upon the secular prince. We, however, together with the universal Church, and all the saints and wise men in the world, affirm the contrary: "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican." The Catholic emperors, therefore, subjected their laws to the canons. So did Withred of Kent, Canute, Edward the Confessor, and William the Conqueror. So should you, O most excellent lord, our king. The evils of which we complain, arose, we believe, in the time of Henry I.: St. Thomas condemned them by his martyrdom. We are compelled thus to write, because we remember the account we shall have to give at the tremendous judgment. We therefore humbly entreat you to listen to our exhortations, especially as you are bound by your oath to extirpate evil customs.*

Such a remonstrance, thrown away, as it seems to have been, upon the grasping Edward, would at least encourage the bishops and their clergy, and serve as a guide to all conscientious nobles. Edward's attention was too firmly set upon the war with the Welsh to attend to duties nearer home. So far from attempting to heal, he only inflamed this grievous dissension. In want of money for his energetic, but as yet baffled attempts to enter the rocky defiles of Snowdonia, he endeavoured to seize money wherever it was to be found, justly or unjustly (A.D. 1283). A crusader himself, he knew well how large were the sums furnished for the East, by both clergy and laity, and equally well did he know in what places they were usually deposited: throwing aside therefore all principle, he broke open the treasures thus collected.

* Wilk. ii. p. 64.

On hearing of this flagrant act of injustice, the Pope commanded the archbishop of Canterbury to go in person and demand that, within one month, the money should be restored to the places from which it had been taken; and to inform the king that, although the Pope numbered him amongst his dearest sons, yet disobedience would draw severe measures upon himself and his dominions. The king was on the borders of Wales, and in the midst of his nobles, when the archbishop presented himself. The latter publicly delivered his message, and his authority, the Pope's letter. The king listened reverently, and after consulting his nobles, answered that the money was already restored.* Why he must needs consult his nobles, if such were really the case, will seem strange to those only who know not the artifices of able but ambitious minds (June 25, 1284). John of Peckham likewise warned Edward that he must make restitution, or compel those that were guilty to make restitution for the destruction of the buildings, and other property of churches and monasteries in Wales, as well as of such laymen as were not in arms against the king.†

There appear to remain but scanty records of John of Peckham's actions after these energetic measures. He seems, however, to have resisted to the last the aggressions of the king. Thus, we are briefly told that Lawrence, chosen bishop by the canons of Salisbury, obtained the king's assent; but that the archbishop of Canterbury refused to confirm the election. The fact, indeed, is too briefly stated to draw from it any satisfactory conclusion. If we can trust Wikes, or his continuator, the king's assent to such an election was now become "a custom." John of Peckham's act seems then, as far as we can rely upon such uncertain premises, to have been pointedly directed against the existence of so undue an interference. Four or five years before the sturdy archbishop's death, a

* See the letters of the Pope and archbishop, Wilk. ii. p. 97.

† Ap. Wilk. ii. p. 101.

dispute arose between the heads of the Oxford University and the bishop of Lincoln. As the University was in the diocese of Lincoln, it was the bishop's province, amongst other rights, to confirm the chancellor. This officer was then annually elected. In 1288, the time being arrived for nominating a new chancellor, the "masters" chose William de Kingstot, and sent messengers to procure the bishop of Lincoln's assent. The bishop replied that he could not give authority and jurisdiction in matters sometimes purely spiritual, to an unknown and absent person. The "masters" replied, that such was their privilege, and that it had thus existed from time immemorial. The bishop, however, could not understand, it seems, how he could, with a safe conscience, leave to the electors not only the choice, but, in reality, the confirmation of the chancellor, and therefore persisted in his refusal. The professors, instead of quietly appealing to the archbishop, took upon themselves to suspend the ordinary lessons. Some even went home, as if it were an ordinary vacation.

After a little time, through the mediation of certain discreet persons, the bishop, as a temporary arrangement, confirmed the appointment, and studies were resumed.

The question was tried in the presence of the king and "discreet mediators of all the kingdom" in 1290; and it was decided that the chancellor elect should be presented *in person*.*

John of Peckham died in 1292,† and was succeeded by an archbishop equally zealous for the liberties of the Church. This was the great theologian Robert de Winchelsey, a man as well informed in mind as he was handsome in person and graceful in manners.

* Contin. of Wikes, 1288—1290. In 1283, when Thomas de Wyndon had been made by the Pope abbot of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, the king, in a parliament at Acton Burnell, in Shropshire, fined him four hundred marks for not having obtained the royal license.—Thorne, 1938.

† So Wadding. Ann. Minor. ad an. No. 25.

He had been successively rector of the whole of the university of Paris, doctor of theology, and chancellor of Oxford, and archdeacon of Essex. Successful in governing, devoted to preaching, and blameless of life, he drew upon himself universal attention and approbation.

This prelate was soon, like his predecessor, involved in difficulties with the grasping Edward. The king had been so completely duped by Philip of France as to have lost all his continental possessions. He was preparing to recover them, when a revolt of the Welsh forced him to hurry back to the west. Scarcely was this outbreak suppressed, when Scotland struck for freedom. Edward had, some time before, been invited to become the umpire in a disputed succession to the Scottish crown. He seized the opportunity to induce the Scottish chiefs to submit to his own claim of being their suzerain. Whether they afterwards believed themselves cajoled, or thought him tyrannical, they formed a treaty with France, and defied Edward. A single campaign, however, laid them helpless at Edward's feet (A.D. 1296). In the following year, Wallace unfurled his standard, and Edward, henceforth, enjoyed scarcely any respite from war. In the intervals of his campaigns, money, money was still his insatiable cry. The Pope sought to mediate; but Edward, the spoiled child of conquest, would abate nothing. The cry of the poor, the curses of the rich, muttered, sometimes, in his very presence,—all was unheeded. After his pillage of money voluntarily bestowed for the Crusades, he found his chief profit in ransacking the hapless Jews. In 1287, he threw them all, to the number of 16,000, into prison, and only released them on the payment of 12,000 marks. In 1290, he charged the whole body with forgery and usury, and expelled them from the kingdom; and for this proceeding he induced the nation to reward him with a fifteenth of its goods. Having lost this means of extortion, he fell more heavily than before upon his Christian subjects. He seized, not only a fraction of

profits, but, in direct violation of the Magna Charta, the very merchandise itself. Wools and hides were then the great staple of English commerce, and upon these Edward laid an unsparing hand. In some years, as 1294 for instance, the wool of the whole country was thus unjustly appropriated. Some, indeed, could be ransomed, but only at an enormous cost.

The clergy suffered no less than the merchants. The king, on such occasions, imitated the practice of the popes, and by means of the archbishop of Canterbury, summoned all dignitaries, and the representatives of the rest of the clergy, to assemble in convocation, and vote the required subsidy. Whether thus assembled, or scattered in their respective localities, it was not easy to resist the importunities and threats of the monarch. Thus, on June the 4th, 1294, royal messengers presented themselves by a preconcerted plan in all the churches and monasteries of the realm, and carried off all the money and valuables to the royal treasury in London. Thus again, September 21st, 1294, Edward summoned the Convocation, and required the clergy to grant him one-half of all their goods. They were thunderstruck; yet knew not what plan to adopt: the archbishop of Canterbury was at Rome, where he was this very month consecrated; the archbishop of York, who ought to have guided the contest, was debtor to the king to a large amount, and dreaded a contest with such a creditor; and the bishop of Durham was in Germany. They finally offered two-tenths. Edward wrathfully answered, that he would put them out of his protection unless they at once complied. Instead of being aroused at so unjust a threat, they had the weakness to assent; but entreated, as some return, that "the Statute of Mortmain, which had been enacted to the prejudice of Holy Mother the Church, should be abolished." The king said that, having been passed by the counsel of his nobles, its abrogation required their concurrence: other minor requests he promised to attend to; and thus, adds Hemingford, they with-

drew, "frustrated and deluded." Again, in November, 1295, not being satisfied with the Convocation's offer of a tenth, he demanded, with threats, the names of those that refused the grant. "God forbid that there should be any division between the head and members," replied the archbishop; "the will of all is one and the same." Turning to his fellow-bishops, Robert added: "Consult upon this; but know that, without help, the king cannot defend himself and you against our enemies." "If he be in peril," they answered, "we will help him; because, perhaps, the Pope will say, the clergy is cherishing those who, against right, are destroying Christians." The archbishop, at last, again offered the same tenth as before, adding, that if in the following year there should not be a sound peace, or a truce that might give hope of peace, they would then render all possible assistance (Nov. 1295).

Unable to extort a greater sum, the king assented. He had, however, conceived a plan of compensation: he seized what are called the alien priories, or the possessions of foreign monks and canons, pensioning each of these oppressed men with eighteen pennies a week.* If these foreigners were residing in France itself, and Edward had conquered their country, such an outrage upon unarmed citizens would have been almost unprecedented, unless in the invasions of infidels. Far less justifiable is such an act to aliens residing amongst us, and being not only ordinary citizens, but religious, whose persons and possessions every Catholic is bound to protect and venerate.

Forgetting that a ruler exists only for the general good of the nation, Edward was looking around for the means of still greater extortions. Where there was so little regard for the very first principles of justice, such means would soon be discovered; Edward

* Ann. Eccl. Wigorn. ap. Whart. i. p. 518; and comp. Wikes, Trivet, Heming., and Ann. Wav. and Dunst., Knighton, Birchington. ap. Whart. i. p. 11, &c.

demand, as he had already on a previous occasion demanded, to scrutinize the treasures of the churches and monasteries (Feb. 12, 1297). Richard I. had vainly endeavoured to establish such a practice. In subsequent years, the clergy and religious had not always been equally firm. Bitter experience made them wiser and bolder; they now refused compliance. The king, in revenge, seized their temporalities, and actually outlawed the whole body of monks and clergy. His decree was not a dead letter; but was rigorously enforced. For a whole month, for instance, the monks of Canterbury, eighty in number, were reduced to beggary. When the remonstrances of the archbishop had procured some mitigation in favour of the monks, it brought upon himself yet greater severity. The unshaken prelate, seeing the king's efforts to strip him, if possible, still more completely, told him that now he had nothing left but his life, which he was willing to give for the honour of God and his Church. One of the historians of the time calls attention to the fact that the day of issuing this outrageous decree was marked by a calamitous defeat of the English in Gascony, the noblest and most valiant of the army being either destroyed or sent to Paris to make a triumphal show. At the very commencement of this persecution, some of his friends, knowing better the arts of the world than the simplicity which stands upon principle, and leaves the issue to God, advised him to put his goods under the king's protection. This he repudiated as only a means of defrauding the very canon law for which he was contending. When, at last, he recovered his property, he was told to return thanks upon his knees. This would be very like asking pardon. The archbishop went into Edward's presence, and standing, exclaimed: "Blessed be the Most High, O lord my king, who by His grace has purified the light of your mental eyes, so that you are able to know your condition, and to choose what is profitable to your salvation."

No wonder that Boniface VIII. said of him that he

alone was the invincible champion and immoveable pillar of the Church in England.*

The royal exactions, however, continued (A.D. 1297). The monks and citizens of Worcester, for instance, were deprived of all their wool and leather, and some of the townsmen, who in their simplicity ventured to make their own clothes out of their own wool, were arrested for contempt of royal majesty. The under-sheriff, at the same time seized, in the king's name, one hundred fat oxen and two hundred rams; and, a few weeks after, the monks had, in addition to the former exactions, to pay sixty pounds as the fifth of their goods.

What happened in Worcester, occurred in some form or other in every part of the country.

The archbishop now ventured to remonstrate with Edward upon this oppression of the Church. The wily prince saw in this remonstrance an opportunity for obtaining additional sums: he promised, in return for liberal aid, to renew their ancient charters of liberties. The archbishop consulted "the clergy in the convocation of prelates," and was answered, that they could make no grant without the permission of the Holy See. The archbishop then enjoined each bishop to excommunicate personally, in his own cathedral, all the invaders of the property either of churches or of ecclesiastical persons.† He had already, indeed, addressed an official letter upon this subject to the bishop of London, to be no doubt formally communicated to the other bishops. In it, he had remarked that the Council of Lateran had pronounced anathema against those that oppressed churches with tallages or other exactions; that Ottoboni had passed decrees in England to the same effect; and that Boniface of

* Ann. Eccl. Wig. ap. Whart. i. p. 520; Birchingt. ap. ib. pp. 14 and 15; Trivet, an. 1297. The Worcester chronicler assigns February, 1296, as the time of Edward's demand for a scrutiny; but there is no real discrepancy between his date and that of Trivet, as he begins his years in March.

† Ann. Eccl. Wig. ap. Whart. i. p. 522.

Canterbury had followed his example. As, however, Winchelsey's letter continues, the evil still exists, let all such invaders of the rights of the Church, as well as all those, whether clergy or laity, who under any pretence pay or consent to pay such moneys, without the permission of the Holy See, know that, by the Pope's sentence, they are "ipso facto" excommunicated.* It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the Pope's object was to exempt ecclesiastical property from all taxes but those which he himself might sanction: it was simply to prevent unjust and unnecessary exactions. This the clergy themselves seem to have clearly understood. In this very year, when Edward was in Flanders, and had assented to certain demands made by the whole nation, the archbishop of Canterbury and his suffragans informed the Pope that without the petition or exaction of any layman, but simply by their own free will, they had voted a tenth of their property and revenues for the expenses of the war (A.D. 1297). The matter appeared so urgent, they said, that they were unable to acquaint his Holiness beforehand with their intention. If they had exceeded his wish, as declared in his bull, they submitted to his correction.† His Holiness, so far from blaming them, declared that he did not censure customary, much less voluntary, aids; nor even such unusual exactions, as, in the opinion of the king and his council, might be necessary for the defence of the state.‡ The king, meantime, found his enemies redoubling. Scotland, which he had so easily prostrated in the former year, had risen up under Wallace as one man, and was actually carrying fire and sword within the English borders. The French, who had vanquished Edward's men in Gascony, had now, with increased forces, begun rapidly to reduce the fortresses of the Flemings, the allies of the English king.

Edward summoned his vassals; but the most powerful informed him by messengers, that he was not to

* Wilk. ii. p. 220.

† Wilk. ii. p. 232; Trivet, an. 1297.

‡ Brady, iii.

expect their services. In these difficulties, he saw the imprudence of his recent seizure of the church property. He now made full restitution, and restored Winchelsea to favour. He then spoke to an assembly of the people at Westminster, endeavouring to soothe their irritation, and to persuade them that it was their battle that he was fighting. Hurrying, immediately afterwards, to Winchelsea, he was about to embark, when he received a document which ought to have opened his eyes to the feeling of the entire nation. This document was a statement of grievances, with a petition for redress, and a remonstrance against his departure for Flanders. It was drawn up in the name of "the archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, and the whole commonalty of the realm." It stated that they were not called with sufficient notice to the Flemish war; nor were they bound to engage in it, because neither they nor their forefathers had ever served in that country; and that, if even they were bound, they could not go, being utterly impoverished by the king's exactions, and many being reduced to the extremity of want, and rendered unable to cultivate their lands. The whole commonwealth, moreover, was oppressed by laws and customs unknown to their forefathers, by the abstraction of their established rights, and by the infringement not only of the Forest Charter, but of every one of the articles of Magna Charta, to the great prejudice of the people. Amongst other grievances, the wool-tax was one to which the petitioners called especial attention. It amounted, they stated, to forty shillings the sack, being, according to their estimate, nearly one-half its value.*

Edward promised to consider the petition on his return; and with an army composed chiefly of Welshmen hastened to Bruges. He found that the Flemings were more inclined to the king of France than to himself or their earl. Continual quarrels broke out, therefore, between them and the English, and a town near Ghent was, on one of these occasions, pillaged

* Apud Trivet.

and burnt. Disastrous tidings, meantime, came from Scotland: Wallace had cut off a large body of the earl of Warrenne's army.*

The mortified king had long been deaf to Boniface VIII.'s entreaties to allow him to act, "not as judge" but as arbitrator, but was now eager enough to receive his mediation. For this purpose a truce for two years was concluded; and Edward hurried to meet his parliament at York. From York he hastened to Roxburgh, the place of rendezvous for the army.

The earls of Norfolk and Hereford, and other barons and knights, who had disobeyed his summons to follow him to Flanders, assembled amongst the rest, and presented a petition which told plainly their firm determination to obtain, not only what they had asked in the previous petition, but even additional concessions and guarantees. Whilst he was still in Flanders, they had forbidden the barons of the Exchequer to levy a tax recently granted; had made an alliance with the Londoners for the recovery of their general rights; and had forced the prince of Wales and the council of regency to confirm the Magna Charta (Sept. 1297), and to add to it what is the foundation of all the real power of the commons, that no tallage or aid should henceforth be imposed "without the common will and assent of the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates; and of the earls, barons, knights, burgesses, and other freemen."

Besides this important concession, no royal minister, without the same "will and assent," could any more seize the produce of the land, or the wool, or hides, or any other property.

All classes, whether clergy or laity, were to have the free enjoyment of all those rights and liberties which they ever possessed.

All rancour and ill will against the confederates were to be laid aside.

To this the council of regency assented; and, at their suggestion, Edward ratified their assent. This

* Trivet, 1297.

ratification, however, did not appear to the confederate barons to be altogether satisfactory. Knowing Edward's inflexible, crafty disposition, they resolved to obtain a formal confirmation of what he had conceded.

Such was the object of their demand at Roxburgh. They appear to have told Edward plainly, that they could not trust a concession made in a foreign land; that they must have an additional guarantee. The king, on his part, promised, but deferred. He could not, however, satisfy the petitioners, or rather claimants, until (strange as it may seem) the bishop of Durham, and the earls of Surrey, Warwick, and Gloucester, stood sureties for the king,* that on returning victorious, he would make the required ratification.

In the following year, Edward returned to London. The confederates had judged rightly of his character: victorious as he had been at Falkirk, and in the whole result of the campaign, he was reminded of his engagement; but deferred an immediate reply. The barons insisted, and Edward found it necessary to yield. When, however, they saw that he attached to the new charter the clause, "saving the rights of the Crown," they indignantly quitted the royal presence. Edward, stern as he was, saw his danger; and knowing but too well the unanimity of the nation, gave, soon after Easter, his formal assent, apparently without condition or reserve (A.D. 1299). In the following year, he renewed this ratification. It was not, however, until 1301, when the earls and barons came to the parliament at Stamford, mounted and armed, that the wary king, who had managed to withhold some clauses of the Forest Charter, was compelled to surrender even these.†

Having thus, at last, secured their object, the barons would naturally be less disinclined to justify and support the king's claims to supreme dominion over the Scottish crown. The Scots had appealed to Boniface; and Boniface had written in their behalf, and, pointing

* "Sponponderunt pro rege."—Trivet, 1298.

† Trivet, 1299—1301.

out their reason for rejecting Edward's pretensions, had declared that Scotland, so far from being a fief of England, was a fief of the Holy See.

Edward called a parliament to Lincoln, endeavoured in a long instrument to establish the validity of his claim, leaving to the assembled barons to complete the answer. They, accordingly, drew up a second instrument, repeating Edward's assertion that Scotland was well known to be a fief of England; and that, regarding this, or any other of his "temporal rights," he was not at all bound, nor could he without injury to the rights of the Crown, and customs of the country, be permitted to plead judicially at Rome. They concluded with "reverently and humbly" entreating the Pope, "kindly to allow" the king, who was "devoted to the Roman Church," to retain the peaceable and undiminished enjoyment of the aforesaid rights and liberties, customs and laws.

The Pope's attention, however, was now engrossed by the violence of the French king. The Scots, on the other hand, retorted against Edward's assertions, meeting fact with fact; and added, in the strongest terms, that, in a matter thus controverted, he was bound to submit to the arbitration of the higher tribunal of the Church of Rome. Against the instrument of the barons, they protested that Scotland, ever since its conversion, had been, both in temporal and spiritual matters, subject to the Holy See, "the last and peculiar refuge of the despoiled and oppressed." *

It was easy for Edward thus to assert his claim; but to enforce it completely was a task that defied his efforts. A second time he had vanquished the Scots everywhere in the open field, and had seized their fortresses; and now, to all appearance, by the capture of Wallace, he destroyed all resistance, even in the Highlands. By the cruel execution of Wallace, he seemed to put the seal upon his conquest (A.D. 1305). Yet at the beginning of the very next year, Bruce was

* Ap. Trivet, 1301. See the letter and instructions in Fordun (Hearne's ed.), pp. 835, 840, &c.

in arms; and although at first defeated, and obliged to take refuge in Ireland, he returned, raised an army of his countrymen, and was crowned at Scone. Edward saw that, for which he had struggled so long, and by means so violent, now escaping from his grasp. He aroused himself, however, as before, to carry his arms into Scotland; but the infirmities of age were pressing heavily upon him: never more was his war-cry to be heard on Scottish ground. He died near the borders, at Burgh-on-the-Sands (A.D. 1307).

A little before his death he seemed to have either recalled to mind the resistance of Winchelsey to his unjust exactions, or to have met with some additional proof of his firm and independent spirit. At all events, evil-disposed men, who had themselves experienced the archbishop's firmness, inflamed his mind to such a degree, that he wrote to Pope Clement V., complaining that the archbishop had long, by taking part with rebellious subjects, displayed a malevolent spirit towards him; and, especially, that he had impeded, what the king professed to have much at heart, another crusade. If the archbishop were to remain longer in the kingdom, he would, the letter asserted, become still more hostile to the royal interests. One of the chief causes of this charge was either something regarding the new charters or else some plan for superseding them. Certain it is that Edward made such representations at Rome regarding the oath which he said had been extorted from him "against his will," that the Pope declared him free from its obligations.

In consequence of this formal complaint, Robert was summoned to Rome. His accuser was now dead; but a full investigation was made, and the archbishop was honourably acquitted.*

* Trivet, 1306; Wilk. Conc. ii. pp. 284—291; Birch, ap. Whart. i. p. 16; Contin. Matt. West. ap. Whart. i. p. 51.

CHAPTER LIII.

MISGOVERNMENT OF EDWARD II.—THE LAWS OF THE “ORDAINERS”
 MISERIES OF ENGLAND—AFFLICTION OF THE CHURCH—EXCOMMUNICATION AGAINST ITS OPPRESSORS—DEATH OF WINCHELSEY
 —A COUNCIL CALLED BY HIS SUCCESSOR IN THE KING’S NAME
 —THE CALL DISREGARDED—THE SUPPRESSION OF THE ORDER OF
 KNIGHTS TEMPLARS—ATTEMPTS TO SEIZE THEIR LANDS—THE
 POPE’S PROHIBITION—SUBMISSION AND DECLARATION OF PARLIAMENT—EXCOMMUNICATION OF PERJURED JURYMEN—REVOLT
 —DEPOSITION OF EDWARD.

EDWARD II.’s policy resembled that of his father; but he had neither the inflexibility nor the abilities of the conqueror of Wales and Scotland. By exactions and other abuses of royal power, and by preference of favourites to his constitutional counsellors, by extravagant expenditure, and by the feebleness of his wars with Scotland, he completely alienated the affections of all classes of his subjects.

Again, as in the reign of his father, the barons confederated, again they went to parliament, despite of the royal prohibition, in arms; and again the monarch was compelled to yield. Nor was he requested merely to sign a charter. This had been done repeatedly; and the same grievances continued. A totally different plan was now adopted: the king was forced to suspend his authority until a committee of eighteen “ordainers,” composed of bishops, earls, and barons, had examined into all abuses, even those of the royal household, and had enacted a variety of laws. Amongst these enactments one was to cause the purveyors or foragers for the royal court to be pursued with the hue and cry, if they attempted to infringe the customary method of collecting the king’s provisions; another was to prevent the king from leaving the realm, appointing the officers of state, or making war,

without the advice of his barons; a third swept away some new taxes upon wool and other merchandise; and a fourth decreed that Gaveston, the royal favourite, for having procured blank charters, signed and sealed by the king, should be sent into perpetual exile (A.D. 1311). These regulations were so stringently supported by excommunication, that when Walter, the bishop of Coventry, was charged with having first sworn to support the ordinances, and yet with having procured a reconciliation between the king and his favourite, and with having infringed the ordinances, he was summoned by the aged Robert of Winchelsey to answer before a provincial synod; and not obeying the summons, was excommunicated. He appealed to Rome.

Tranquillity succeeded, but was soon disturbed. Gaveston returned, was captured, and beheaded (A.D. 1312). Edward was levying an army when he heard of this deed of blood; he was in no condition to resist. He made a formal treaty with the barons, pardoning their violence, and promising to observe the laws of the ordainers. In the following year, continuing the Scottish war, he escaped with difficulty from the disastrous field of Bannockburn (A.D. 1313).

The Scots rose upon all the English garrisons; and successful at home, swept across the border in many a sanguinary inroad. The flames of Northallerton and Scarborough, and the ransom by which alone Ripon escaped the Scottish torch, told of the desperate nature of these inroads.

Famine, meantime, fell upon the land; and pestilence alike upon man and beast. Multitudes died; and multitudes sought bread by adding the horrors of blood and pillage, to the universal affliction.

Scarcely had these evils abated, when the barons were again in arms, to expel a new favourite, Hugh De Spencer. The king, however, took a speedy revenge. Lancaster, his cousin, was his chief opponent, and falling into his hands, was beheaded (A.D. 1321). His allies, the Scots, were punished by a new, but feeble,

invasion. This they amply revenged; and Ripon, now no longer able to buy security, was burnt, and Beverley, remote as it was from the Scottish border, was forced to pay a ransom of four hundred pounds. In other respects, the country was again apparently tranquil; but it was a calm precursive of a more disastrous tempest, in which Edward himself was to perish.*

In the midst of all these troubles, the Church held on its usual course of occasional triumphs and incessant conflict. Soon after his return from Rome, Robert of Winchelsey, by command of the Pope, presented the king with a long list of ecclesiastical grievances: amongst the rest, complaint was made, that some of the Pope's legates had been grossly insulted, and impeded in the business for which they were sent; that the king's ministers and the nobles, pretending that all the monasteries were founded by themselves, resorted to them at pleasure, and exacted from them heavy sums of money; and that the property of sees and benefices, when in the royal custody, has been grievously wasted and ruined.

The king deferred an answer until he could consult his nobles. When asked a second time, he said there was so much discord amongst some of his nobles, that a further delay was necessary; but that as soon as he had the power, he would, as an obedient son of the Church, apply a remedy. The futility of his promise was evident from the ominous clause, "saving the rights of the Crown," which, as facts again and again had proved, meant no other than the usurpations of the Crown.†

Seeing the innumerable evils that were growing and multiplying on all sides, Robert now resorted to the usual canonical remedy. In full pontificals, attended by the bishop of Bangor, and in presence of the prior and monks of Christchurch, and of all the priests of

* De la Moor and Murimuth, and Vita Ed. II. ap. Hearne; Wilk. ii. p. 420.

† Wilk. ii. pp. 325—328.

Canterbury, clad in surplices, and holding lighted candles in their hands, he recited briefly his former declaration of what Otto and Ottoboni had decreed with regard to the invaders of ecclesiastical property and rights, and stating that many rather contemned than feared the sentence so often repeated, he now solemnly renewed that sentence, declaring all such invaders to have incurred excommunication, and the malediction of God and of blessed Thomas the martyr.* The days of the good and bold archbishop Winchelsey were now drawing to a close. He died on the 11th of May, 1313. Like his great predecessors, St. Anselm and St. Thomas, he was remarkable for his devotion to the Passion and to the Blessed Virgin. He renewed St. Anselm's injunction that the Conception of the Blessed Virgin should be observed "as a festival."† Whenever he found an interval of leisure, he immediately began the Hail Mary, counting upon his fingers, until he had completed a decad. Every change of place and occupation, found him engaged in the same devotion.‡ Many public cures were wrought at his tomb. An examination (1318) into these reputed miracles confirmed the impression of his sanctity to such a degree, that the prior and chapter of Canterbury petitioned the Holy See for his canonization (A.D. 1320).§

Walter, the next archbishop, who had been one of the royal chaplains, and then bishop of Worcester, was a good and generally a firm ruler, but had but a small share of the energy and indomitable resolution of his predecessor. An occurrence, not many months after his consecration, points out a want either of knowledge or of independence. His predecessors had been in the habit, at the king's suggestion, of summoning the Convocation, the object of which was to vote supplies. Walter, however, was requested by

* Wilk. ii. p. 401.

† Harpsf. p. 529.

‡ Steph. Birch. ap. Whart. i. pp. 13 and 17. See his letter to his suffragan, the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield.

§ Ap. Wilk. ii. pp. 486 and 500.

Edward to call them to a council. This was a thing unheard of, the only object of a council or synod being exclusively ecclesiastical. Walter, as if he knew no such difference, complied. The astonished clergy, seeing themselves called in the king's name to that with which the king had never anything to do, refused unanimously to obey so uncanonical an order. They thus destroyed a most evil precedent.* One of the first acts of Walter was, to settle the transfer of the property of the suppressed order of the Templars. This order had been established by one of the bishops of Jerusalem, as a sort of armed police for the defence of pilgrims between the port of Joppa and Jerusalem (A.D. 1118). Its members took the vows of perpetual chastity, obedience, and individual poverty. From a band of only nine, they soon increased to many hundreds, and were among the hardiest and most courageous of all the crusaders. Whether they had allowed the growing wealth of their order to corrupt them, or were the victims of calumny, Clement V. deemed it advisable to suppress them. The council of Vienne, which was then sitting (A.D. 1311), directed that their property should be given to the kindred military order, known as Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, or Hospitallers. Such an arrangement would most nearly meet the wishes of those that had bequeathed such property. In England, however, both king and nobles, and even some of the bishops, began at once to lay hands upon the tempting spoils. To palliate their conduct, they succeeded in procuring from some of the judges, a declaration that such lands returned as escheats to the families of the original grantors. This might have been true, had they been given as fiefs. Instead of which they had been given as free alms.

Word came, therefore, from the Holy See, that these lands must be yielded back; and severe penalties were, meantime, impending over the heads of Walter the archbishop of Canterbury, and the other prelates

* Wilk. ii. p. 442.

of England. Walter, having shown the Pope's letters to the king, bishops, and nobles assembled in parliament, it was declared that the Pope must be obeyed, and that disobedience ought to be punished with ecclesiastical penalties.

Encouraged by this declaration, Walter proceeded to carry into effect the Pope's wishes; but was disconcerted by most severe prohibitory letters from Edward. Bitterly afflicted as he was at this disobedience of the king, he determined to do his duty. His efforts, supported by the plain language of the Holy See, were not without fruit: two years afterwards, a "great conference" deliberated in full parliament, whether the lords of the fees, and others who had taken possession of the disputed lands, could hold them "by the law of the realm, and with a safe conscience." It was at last decided, that as they had been granted for the defence of the Holy Land, as well as of the universal Church, neither the king nor the lords of the fiefs, nor "any other person, hath title or right to retain the aforesaid lands;" but that the entire property should be applied to the same purposes, in the order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. The Parliament expressly declared that it thus decided in obedience to the Holy See, for the health of their own souls and consciences.

In the course of these proceedings, Walter seems to have been occasionally impeded by the corruption of the jury. Tempted by bribes, by their natural sympathies, and by other influences, some of these men were in the habit of openly perjuring themselves. Walter, therefore, decreed that every Sunday, at the celebration of mass, they should be publicly stricken with anathema.*

Great results are often caused by small, if not con-

* Harps. (p. 528, Douay, 1622) founding the chief part upon the registers.

Sir Thomas de la Moor's Edw. II. p. 593, &c.; stat. 17 Edw. II. The records from which this statute was printed were imperfect, but may be supplied from Harpsfeld.

temptible, agencies. Had the king not taken advantage of the criminal facility of the jury, and forced them by a royal command to return a verdict against Adam de Orlton, the bishop of Hereford, he might even yet have escaped the consequences of his own misrule.

In the pause that followed the execution of Lancaster, he charged Adam de Orlton with having aided and abetted the late rebellion (A.D. 1323). As long as his accusation was confined to reproaches, Adam remained silent; but when the king ordered him to be tried by the Lords, he reminded the king that the archbishop of Canterbury, "next to the Pope," was his immediate judge. The archbishop and all the bishops present, now rose, and entreated in favour of the bishop; but Edward's anger was not thus to be subdued. Seeing this, the bishops stood firmly upon their privileges, and Edward was compelled to yield to right, what he had refused to mercy and reason: Adam was thus placed in the custody of the archbishop. With his usual rash inconsistency, Edward, in a few days, suddenly seized the bishop, and placed him again on trial. In the midst of the proceedings an unusual but effectual interruption took place: the archbishops of Canterbury, York, and Dublin, and ten other bishops, entered the court with their crosses displayed; and taking Adam into their company, at once withdrew. At the royal command, however, the jury found a verdict of guilty, and the king seized his temporalities.*

Not many months after, a plot began to unfold, in which Adam took a conspicuous part. Its origin is not distinctly known; but the queen herself, forgetting even natural affection, headed the opponents of her lord. When her plans were fully arranged, she landed at the mouth of the Orwell. She was at once joined by the earl marshal and other powerful barons.

* Compare Murim. A.D. 1323, De la Moor, and Walsing. The difference of views in these writers is but too common in the confusion of civil war.

Thus supported, she moved to the west against her husband. She took care to spread a report, says De la Moor, that the Pope had absolved the king's subjects from their allegiance, and had excommunicated all his adherents. To give cogency to this report, it was industriously added that two cardinals were staying with the queen's army. Having spread these rumours, and pushed across the country, the queen besieged and speedily took Bristol; put the De Spencers, Edward's favourites, to death; and left the king himself to languish and perish in a dungeon.

The Londoners, meantime, rose upon the king's ministers. One of them, the good and learned bishop of Exeter, was seized, wounded, and bound, at the very gates of St. Paul's; and being dragged to the Great Cross in Cheapside, was stripped and beheaded.

When the queen had returned to London, and had witnessed the formal deposition of her husband, the citizens feared that they might be called to account for the late sedition and bloodshed. They, therefore, compelled the archbishops of Canterbury, York, and Dublin, as well as other prelates, to take an oath in the Guildhall, to maintain and defend the rights and liberties of the city of London. The bishop of Rochester seems to have been the only one that so much as qualified this promise: he added, in presence of his notary and other witnesses, that he took the oath saving his order and the articles of Magna Charta.*

* De la Moor, p. 599, &c.; Murim. 1325; Will. de Dene's His. Rof., Whart. vol. i. pp. 366, 367.

CHAPTER LIV.

MISERIES OF THE PEOPLE UNDER EDWARD III.—WAR FOR THE FRENCH CROWN—ILLEGAL ARRESTS—SELF-CONDEMNATION AND BOLD REMONSTRANCE OF JOHN DE STRATFORD—HIS STRANGE RECEPTION IN PARLIAMENT—IS RECONCILED WITH THE KING—HORRORS OF THE FRENCH WAR—MEDIATION OF THE POPES—PESTILENCE—SUFFERINGS AND CONSTANCY OF THE BISHOP OF ELY.

WHEN Edward III. had thus obtained his father's crown, and had, at length, reached the years of manhood, and had shaken off the tutelage of the queen and Mortimer, the country seems for some years to have remained a prey to every kind of disorder. Unable to reduce it to anything like tranquillity, the young king requested and urged the bishops, in accordance with some promise which they had made, to pronounce a solemn excommunication against the powerful malefactors who thus disturbed the public peace (A.D. 1333).*

As if quite forgetful of these miseries, and forgetful too of his inglorious campaigns against the Scots, Edward recklessly plunged into war for the crown of France. He aspired to the throne of that kingdom, as the nearest heir male in the direct line. This claim was a mere pretence. Not so the cruel reality of the war that ensued. Before Edward could strike a blow, the French fleets were prowling on the Irwell, on the Waters of Southampton, and on the Bristol Channel. Wherever the coast appeared weak, they approached, and marked their inroads in blood and pillage and blackened ruins. Even the fortified towns were not always respected: Southampton, for instance, was assailed, taken, and totally consumed with fire. The

* See the letter in Wilk. ii. 562.

Scotch, meantime, seized their opportunity ; and, again and again, all the North was in tumult, fleeing, fighting, plundering. What comfort for Edward that he did in France what the Scotch and French did in England ! He was not only extending human misery ; but, like his ruthless grandfather, he was draining the resources of his people. By seizing the wool and tin, and giving for it little or no compensation ; by wringing out subsidy after subsidy, he won at last the naval victory of Sluys ; but the French crown was as far as ever from his grasp. He had pushed on to Tournay, and almost captured the town ; but money now began to come in slowly from England ; and, therefore, being obliged to consent to a truce, Edward came back raging to his capital, displacing or imprisoning even the officers of state, and compelling all alike to pay heavy fines as if guilty of some enormous offence.*

He was about to arrest, amongst others, his chancellor, the bishop of Chichester, when he was reminded that, by a constitution of Pope Clement, he could not arrest a bishop. He suffered him to depart. The Parliament, which was soon after assembled, spoke almost as plainly as the bishop of the rights of the subject and the liberties of the Church, as guaranteed in Magna Charta, and, after much debate, obliged the king to confirm these liberties.

The archbishop, John de Stratford, who was also marked for arrest, had escaped to Christchurch, Canterbury ; and there preaching to the people on the feast of St. Thomas's martyrdom, after a panegyric on the saint, he closed his sermon with a self-condemnation. Ever since his election to the archiepiscopal see he had been, he acknowledged, engaged in secular business, burthening both clergy and people for the

* "Qui justiciarii tam rigide et voluntarie processerunt, quod nullus impunitus evasit, sive bene gesserit regis negotia sive male ; ita quod sine delicto omnes, etiam non indictati nec accusati, excessive se redemerunt, qui voluerunt carcerem evitare, nec permiserunt quod aliquis se purgaret."—Ad Murim. an. 1340, p. 111, ed. Hist. Soc.

king's purposes, and neglecting, for such pursuits, the divine offices. He entreated, with tears, the forgiveness of the assembled people, and promised to lay aside worldly business, and to be a strenuous defender of the rights both of the clergy and people. He ended the whole discourse with a solemn excommunication of all those who, by the late illegal arrests, had violated Magna Charta and the rights of the Church; and long before parliament had won any promise from Edward, he wrote a bold remonstrance, warning the king to beware of tampering with the liberties of the Church and kingdom, and reminding him of the fate, both of Roboam, and of his father, Edward II., when these kings took counsel from the young, and slighted the law. "By the arrests which you have made," continued the archbishop, "the Magna Charta, though confirmed by a papal bull, has been violated, and your coronation-oath has been violated. You thus injure your own soul, and lose the hearts and the support of your people. If you wish for an account of the wool and money, give me a safe-conduct; assemble the bishops and peers, and great men of your kingdom; and before them let inquiry be made, and let him that is found fraudulent be punished according to law." *

When more than a month had elapsed, Edward adopted a novel mode of replying. He sent a letter to the dean and chapter of St. Paul's, and ordered them to make it known wherever they went. A copy of this was probably sent to every part of the kingdom. At all events, another to the same effect is extant, addressed to the prior and chapter of Canterbury. These circulars contained nothing new, however, and coloured or suppressed the illegal fines and arrests. They laid stress upon the king's labours and victories in his French war; spoke of the archbishop's greatness, as if it were the gift of the Crown; and, finally,

* Compare Murim. ad an. pp. 110—130, ed. of Eng. Hist. Soc.; and Avesbury. See also Wals. Upodig. Neustr. an. 1337.

poured out against him a torrent of accusations and invectives.*

Edward, at the same time, complained to the Pope; but his charges were too vague for any formal notice on the part of the Holy See. Neither terrified at the king's anger, nor indifferent to the effect of royal influence, the archbishop vindicated himself from the king's insinuations, and prepared for a public encounter with all the power and craft of royalty.

A parliament had now been summoned; and the archbishop having obtained from Edward a safe-conduct, repaired to Westminster, to take his usual seat in the Painted Chamber. As he entered, Lord Stafford, the seneschal of the palace, Darcy, the royal chamberlain, and others, met him, and informed him that before entering parliament, he had to reply, in the Court of Exchequer, to the king's accusations. He answered that that day's appointment was for quite another purpose. To please Edward, however, he went to the Exchequer, and having heard the charges against him, repaired to the Chamber of Peers. He told three bishops who had already arrived, that he had come to defend the rights and liberties of the Church, for the utility of the realm and the king's honour, for clearing himself of the charges made against him, and out of obedience to the king's writ. He soon discovered that his presence was a signal for the cessation of all business. He was not so easily to be disconcerted: he again and again took his place; but always with the same novel result. He was, at last, informed privately, that if he again came, he would be shut out.

He took no notice of the intelligence; but went to the palace, bearing in his own hands his archiepiscopal cross, and surrounded by his suffragan bishops. Darcy and other knights stopped them at the door, with reproaches and threats. The archbishop, however, refused to depart: "Here is my body, do with it what

* See Wilk. ii. A.D. 1340 and 1341; Avesbury, p. 77, ed. Hearne and Steph. Birch. ap. Whart. i. p. 23.

you will. I hope to give back my soul to my Creator." "No, no," they returned, "you are not so deserving, nor are we so unwise; but you have come hither in disobedience to your liege lord." The replies of the archbishop producing but insult, he became silent; and the knights, at last, withdrew. The earls of Salisbury and Northampton now coming out, John requested them to inform the king of what had passed, and to beseech him to preserve the rights of the church of Canterbury. Meantime, he swerved not from his course, but excommunicated the invaders of ecclesiastical rights and property; as well as those that procured benefices not yet vacant, and those that obtained institution from temporal lords (Dec. 1340, or early in 1341).* After much negotiation, and a petition from the archbishop to be allowed to clear himself in parliament, many bishops, nobles, and abbots so urgently pressed the king, that he consented to a reconciliation (May, 1341). In the following year, Edward readmitted him into his privy-council. John became one of the most trusted of the royal advisers in the campaign that closed in the victory of Crecy and the siege of Calais (Aug. 1346). This intrepid archbishop died on the vigil of St. Bartholomew, 1348.†

The war in France, with all its glory and misery, had now reached its height. Its exciting vicissitudes, as they glitter forth in the too highly-coloured pages of Froissart, fill the young and the unreflecting with a warlike joy. As far, indeed, as they display and foster cheerful endurance, energy, courage, self-control, they are undoubtedly admirable; as far as they are an act of just defence against great and encroaching evil, they are necessary. As, however, they invariably display and foster, at the same time, and in greater proportion, the basest passions; as they pour out

* W. ii. 678.

† Steph. Birch. ap. Whart. i. pp. 36—41; Wilk. ii. A.D. 1340. It is much to be regretted that Birchington did not collect all the particulars of a contest so interesting.

innumerable woes upon the unprotected, they cannot be viewed by the reflecting without a shudder. Amidst the din of the French and Scottish wars, one voice, that of St. Peter's successor, had again and again been raised in behalf of the down-trodden and unheeded masses. These exertions were not always duly appreciated. Of those that closely watched the course of events, in order to chronicle them for future ages, there were some in England who too often pretended to see in these exertions of the popes only a blind partiality for the French. The popes, however, faithful to their mission, toiled on, through good report and evil report. When the carnage had ceased in the forest of Crecy, and on the fields of Durham, and when now the English lines had closed around the walls of Calais, while the army of Philip was hovering upon the horizon, letters came from Pope Clement VI. to deprecate once more "the slaughter of innumerable persons who had been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ;" "the bitterly-lamentable peril of souls;" "the groans of the poor, of little ones, of orphans, and of widows;" as well as the destruction of churches, monasteries, and holy places. The letter concluded with earnest entreaties to make peace, and thus heal the wounds of society, and enable the West to crush the ruthless enemies of the Christian name in the East.*

This appeal, like many preceding ones, was fruitless: nothing less than the kingdom of France, united as it was against him, could satisfy Edward's "ill-weaved ambition." He consented, indeed, to a short-lived truce (Sept. 1347); but even this he seldom did until his resources were well nigh drained. Had Edward listened to the message, his life might have set in the twofold glory of victory and mercy. He despised it; and although he still achieved some signal feats of arms, a dark cloud seemed to impend over every expedition, until all his glory had faded,

* See the letter, as well as Edward's, ap. Avesb. p. 146, et seq.

almost all his possessions abroad had been lost, and his own life had ebbed away in abandonment, vice, and premature decrepitude.

He had not long triumphed in the possession of Calais, when a fearful calamity filled the entire country with consternation and horror. This was the Black Pestilence. After ravaging Egypt, it swept over Europe, and, in the midst of the Christmas festivities of 1348, it fell upon England. It disappeared in May, 1349; but not until one-third, or, as some say, one-half, of the population had been destroyed. Tillage ceased; the courts of justice were closed. Sheep were dying like men, but there was no longer a shepherd to save the flocks, nor any longer servants to drive the cattle from the corn. The living scarcely sufficed to give burial, and the rites of the Church, to the dead. Even when the scourge had passed, the harvest in many places rotted on the fields, for want of reapers.*

When the Scotch heard of this affliction, they jeeringly swore, as their most popular oath, "by the foul death of England." Nor was their want of Christian feeling confined to words: they assembled in Selkirk Forest, for the avowed purpose of invading and conquering their prostrate enemy; but suddenly they themselves began to sicken and die, and the "foul death" of five thousand of their number drove back the rest in terror to their homes.

When, at length, the scourge was removed, mortality amongst the priests had been so enormous, that, as Birchington testifies, the country parish churches "were entirely destitute of service."† In places even where the clergy survived, they found that their flock had become too small for their support, and abandoned their livings. It required all the zeal and firmness of the bishops to supply the deficiency. The difficulty was increased by the mortality amongst the bishops

* Avesbury, 177, &c.; Knighton, 1348. Knighton was a canon of Leicester in the reign of Edward III.

† "Inofficiatæ penitus." Birchington made his solemn profession as monk of Christ Church, Canterbury, in 1382.—Whart. pref. xvii.

themselves, six suffragans of Canterbury having died in the five months of the plague's continuance. Pope Innocent filled up their places, says Birchington, with "good clerics and doctors." *

Scarcely eleven years had passed, when a second pestilence fell upon the country, sweeping off three bishops amongst its numerous victims (A.D. 1360). Eight years later, the scourge returned, and was followed, as before, by famine; whilst the French war, after a brief pause, was again raging in all its horror.†

Soon after the first of these fearful calamities, there arose between Edward and Thomas, the bishop of Ely, a contest too remarkable, notwithstanding our ignorance of its details, to be altogether omitted.

A few years before Stratford's death, the see of Ely being vacant, Clement VI. declined the person elected, and appointed, by a provision or reservation, Thomas de Lylde, a learned and eloquent Dominican (A.D. 1344). Thomas was, accordingly, enthroned, receiving, as usual, the temporalities. He attracted attention, at first, by the magnificence of his equipage, and by his selection of the ablest lawyers and most valiant knights. Soon, however, as if he were himself struck, though very differently from others, by this barren pomp, he dismissed the greater part of his retinue. His glowing sermons and active visitations marked him out as a man of God: misfortunes were now to prove his virtue.

Certain houses in the messuage of Colne, in Huntingdonshire, belonging to the Lady de Wake (who was related to the royal family), were set on fire and consumed. No less a person than the bishop of Ely was maliciously reported to be the instigator. Royal briefs for an investigation were immediately issued. The royal justiciaries accordingly arrived, and chose a jury from the knights of the neighbour-

* Ap. Whart. i. pp. 42—45; Hist. Eccl. Roff. ap. Whart. i. p. 375. Compare Murim. and Knighton.

† Contin. of Murim. p. 195 and 205; Knighton.

hood. The verdict was, that certain persons were guilty, but that the bishop was a "consenting" party. This was not what the justiciaries wanted: they sent back the jury to consult whether the bishop were not an accomplice in the fact. The compliant jury now found that he was. He was fined nine hundred pounds of silver.*

He obtained royal briefs against the jurors for false testimony; but the late process was not forthcoming. It was said to be in the possession of some of the assessors; then of a knight who lived a little out of the town (Huntingdon). The whole day was spent in this search; the justiciaries, meantime, sitting and awaiting the event.

It certainly looked strange that a public document could not be found, and yet that no one was held responsible for it. The bishop thought it most prudent to lay the case before Edward himself, little anticipating what kind of a reception awaited him. He therefore hastened to the king, and found him awaking with his knights.

He prayed for an audience. Edward called one of his knights to be a witness of their conversation. He then exclaimed, as if a second trial could legally be incurred, or as if the charge against the jury were to be altogether overlooked, "My lord bishop, it is said that the cause which has arisen between you and our beloved relative, the Lady Wake, will be very odious to us, to our nobles, and to the people of our kingdom. We intend to take it into our own hands, and not to allow your will to be done in everything, nor hers, but

* Contin. Hist. Eliens. pp. 652—656. Of this continuation of the Annals of Ely, Wharton informs us (Pref. No. li. p. xlv.) that there were either two or three successive writers. From the appearance of the writing of the MSS. one writer seems to have finished in 1388, and the second in 1434, or, if there were not a third, in 1486. The internal evidence seems to prove that even the first part was written by a contemporary. Compare also Wals. Hist. Angl., and his Upodig. an. 1358. Walsingham wrote in the beginning of the following century; he says that the charges against the bishop were the unjust contrivances of the Lady de Wake.

that, by taking a middle course, peace and concord may, God willing, be restored between you." "Most excellent lord," answered the bishop, "let your serenity, so please you, command that the forementioned cause be discussed between us according to the law and justice of the kingdom."

"And who hinders you," said Edward, "from obtaining in our kingdom law and justice?"—"My lord, so it is, that in my cause I cannot obtain law or justice; being hindered, I believe, by the royal power." The king's anger flashed up at these words; without asking for a reason or an explanation, he cried out,— "Certainly, you, Thomas de Lylde, say what is false; for you were never hindered. But you shall have the law, without, however, the favour of the law." Thus they parted.

Soon after, in the Chamber of Peers, Edward turned to the bishop, saying: "Thomas de Lylde, you lately urged upon us that you could not have the law in your cause, being impeded by our royal power." Such, he replied, were not his words. Before he could explain himself, the king's anger had again overcome him: "Most certainly you, Thomas de Lylde, openly lie, for such things you did say;" and at once he summoned the knight whom he had made his witness. The knight declared that such were the words. Who does not know the worth of a courtier's testimony under the eye of the monarch? The words alleged were intended, it would seem, to apply to the royal justiciaries; but Edward, by the simple change of "the" into "our," made it seem to be applied personally to himself. Whether this were the reason of Thomas's denial or not, he was not allowed an opportunity for stating.

The archbishop and all the bishops, but Thomas himself, now approached the enraged king, and kneeling, besought him to receive the bishop again into his favour. Thomas, however, was not disposed to beg: he stood erect, as in such a case a freeman ought, and as if he were collecting his thoughts to

make a reply. Finding that the king's wrath continued unabated, he finally withdrew from the royal presence.

Whilst Thomas was under this affliction, a most unfortunate occurrence added to his trials. Ralph, his chamberlain, quarrelled with one of Lady Wake's retainers, and slew him. On receiving this intelligence, the bishop exclaimed: "I am straitened on every side. Now do I truly know that I cannot escape, without great expense and danger; since, so to speak, the whole weight of the battle has been turned upon my head." These words seem to intimate that there was some greater contest, of which his own formed only a part: an expression, to us, unfortunately, so obscure, added to what he had said of the royal power, seems to point to the contest so long waged for ecclesiastical liberty. Whatever his meaning, he was right as far as regarded himself: a coroner's inquest being held, the jury found Ralph guilty of the murder. They added, that the bishop was a consenting party, having given shelter to the murderer. This was the very reverse of the truth. The bishop had charged his governor of the isle of Ely, William de Stanstede, to search for the murderer in every part of the isle, and to deal with him according to law.

In accordance with the coroner's verdict, the bishop was summoned to the King's Bench, and the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of Rochester accompanied him. Notwithstanding his demand for a trial by his peers, he was tried by a jury. He was acquitted of being a consenting party, but found guilty of having, knowingly, received the murderer. He was deprived of his temporalities. Where was now the spirit of Stratford and Winchelsey? It was not in the heart of him who now filled their place.

The aggrieved prelate requested Simon Islip, who was now the archbishop of Canterbury, to admit him to a canonical purgation. The archbishop, therefore,

according to the usual form, caused proclamation to be made in various places, fixing the place and time for the appearance of any one who might wish to object to the bishop's admission to canonical purgation. No one appeared.

Thomas, therefore, pressed the archbishop to fix a time and place for the appearance of the compurgators. Simon, however, not wishing to displease Edward, advised the bishop to obtain a reconciliation with the king. Thomas had, from the beginning, stood upon his right, and resolved to persevere: he again urged his request, reminding Islip that he was bound to assent. Islip, however, instead of looking at the demands of justice, was thinking of the angry looks of the victor of Crecy; and therefore deferred the matter, "for greater utility," as he said, and for, what indeed was the real point, obtaining "the king's assent." *

Thomas had recourse now to the Holy See. Towards the close of 1356, he made his escape, having been condemned, says Birchington, to perpetual imprisonment, and hastened to Avignon, where the popes had been residing for nearly fifty years. The archbishop Islip immediately received a mandate to lay before the Holy See a complete account of the late judicial proceedings against the bishop. After due examination, the Pope and cardinals declared that several of the proceedings instituted against the bishop, violated the liberties of the whole Church, and they summoned many of the parties to answer the bishop's charges. None obeyed. They were excommunicated (A.D. 1358); but still, by edicts from the Holy See, set up upon the gates of St. Paul's, and "published in various parish churches" and "other public places" in England, they were "peremptorily" summoned to appear (A.D. 1361). In this summons, the king's justiciaries were expressly mentioned: they were charged with having procured a "malicious conviction." Not heeding this citation,

* Cont. Hist. El. pp. 656—660; and Birchingt. pp. 44 and 45; ap. Whart, v. i. See also Wals. Upodig. an. 1358.

they were excommunicated with the greater censures. They were still contumacious. Some dying under censure, and receiving Christian burial, were exhumed, and their bodies cast out of the churchyards. Drayton, a knight, who died thus excommunicated, had received the usual burial rites of Holy Church. At the Pope's command, he was disinterred by the bishop of Lincoln, and his body cast into a neighbouring marsh.

The king, as if he himself were blameless, professed to consider this treatment of the dead as too severe. Some of his courtly nobles echoed his words; and a commission of inquiry was instituted, to discover those that obeyed the Holy See, and published its edicts. The prisons soon began to open to a class of confessors almost new to England: laity, priests, monks, all that loved the chair of Peter more than the things of this world, and had not powerful friends, were treated as felons.* Amongst the rest were three persons, a clergyman and two lay companions, who were travelling across England, with letters of censure from the Holy See. They were committed to Newgate; and there perished of hunger and neglect.

Hearing of proceedings so unworthy of a Catholic country, the Pope cited, and finally excommunicated, many others, fixing their names upon the gates of his own palace, in order to avoid exposing his messengers to martyrdom.

Procurators from the king and nobles of England had now appeared at Avignon; but before the close of their negotiations, Bishop Thomas went to the reward of his labours (A.D. 1361). His memory, says the chronicler of Ely, is numbered with that of the chosen bishops of God. He was buried in a convent of the

* Will. de Dene; Hist. Ecc. Roff. ap. Whart. i.; Steph. Birch. ib. pp. 44 and 45. "Quidam vero viri religiosi et sæculares, clerici et laici fuerant indietati. Ex quibus quidam capti erant et incarcerati, et variis afflicti injuriis, pœna duplici, corporali et pecuniaria, sunt multati."—Cont. Hist. El. ap. Whart. i. p. 661.

Dominicanesses near Avignon, in the church of St. Praxedis.* His five immediate successors were all appointed by the direct authority of the Pope (to A.D. 1434). It appears that the bishop's death put an end to the proceedings against Edward.†

* Ib. p. 662.

† Ib. p. 668; Harpsfeld (quoting Islip's Regist.) p. 571.

CHAPTER LV.

STATUTES OF PROVISORS—THE POPE'S REMONSTRANCE—SINGULAR
REPLY OF EDWARD III.—THE REAL MEANING DIVULGED BY JOHN
OF SHOREDITCH—THREAT OF EXCOMMUNICATION—COURTLY
CHRONICLERS—CONCORDAT OF BRUGES—RESPECTIVE EFFECTS OF
PROVISIONS AND OF THE ROYAL INTERFERENCE—IN WHAT CASES
THE PROVISIONS WERE STILL GRANTED.

IMPOVERISHED by his French and Scottish wars, yet obstinate in his refusal to make, unless he could dictate, a peace, Edward was incessantly employed in scrutinizing every means of supply, and wringing, as unrelentingly as his grandfather, the wool, and tin, and other merchandise, from his subjects. It was only when the claims of others, not of himself, were concerned, that he assumed the appearance of affording solace to the afflicted nation.

From the time of John to his own, the annual tribute of a thousand marks had been, more or less regularly, paid to the Holy See. During the latter half of Edward the First's reign, it was neglected; but was paid up in the reign of his successor. Under Edward III., it was collected as usual, until the pressure of the French wars. Thirty years of non-payment having elapsed, Urban V. pressed for the arrears. The king communicated with his parliament, and returned for answer, that the act of John was not that of the nation, and that, being against his coronation-oath, it was, therefore, invalid. If the reader but turn back to that period and notice the conduct of the barons, and if, moreover, he bear in mind the century and a half during which the money had been paid, he will be surprised at the hardihood of this summary reply. The popes, however, do not seem to have afterwards insisted upon their claim: it was allowed to grow obsolete.

There was one point of contest more intimately connected with the spiritual functions of church government, from which they could not so easily recede. This was the question of Provisors, already stated in the reign of Henry III.

In 1342, two cardinals received "provisions" to certain benefices in England. To enter into possession, they employed official procurators or proxies. These officers, however, were thrown into prison by royal command, and afterwards expelled from the kingdom; an act being passed in the course of the year, forbidding "provisions" or other letters against the rights of the king or his subjects, under pain of being carried for punishment before the king's council.* The Pope, immediately on hearing of the treatment of the procurators, wrote to Edward, reminding him of the justice of each country's contributing to the expense of the general administration of the Church, as well as of the fact that the two cardinals were the king's own subjects, being natives of Aquitaine, and that the whole college of cardinals shared with himself in the toils of church government. The same rule, he added, had been followed in most Catholic countries; and no disobedience to it had been so much as heard of. He trusted, therefore, that reparation would be made for the injury to the cardinals (Aug. 1343).†

Edward's reply was of a most reckless character. It was drawn up with but too statesmanlike a mixture of truth, ambiguity, and manifest untruth; all glossed over with a display of zeal for justice, that would be very praiseworthy were it not in direct contradiction to the general tenour of the reign of Edward, and of every one of his predecessors from the days of William Rufus. From the beginning of Christianity, the letter asserted, the churches were founded, endowed, and provided with clergy by the kings, nobles, and faithful.

* Rot. Parl. ii. 145.

† This letter, and that of the king, are given by Walsingham in an inverted order, the Pope's being "5th of Calends of September," and the king's "26th of September."

These clergy were good and useful in public affairs ; but those to whom the popes had granted "provisions," were the reverse : were ignorant of the language, and allowed the buildings to fall into ruin. "It is time to recall to ourselves the right of patronage, the cognizance of which belongs to our courts. Our jurisdiction has been frustrated. The prerogatives of our crown have been neglected. The money of the realm has been transferred to foreign countries, not to say to our enemies, perhaps from a secret plan to weaken the kingdom by draining its resources. To these matters, our parliament has called our attention, and prayed for a remedy. We, therefore, beg that the elections in cathedral and other churches be allowed to be free ; since formerly our ancestors conferred these churches by the prerogative of their crown, and, afterwards, at the prayer of the Holy See, conferred upon the chapters the right of election, upon certain conditions : a concession which the Holy See confirmed. Those conditions have been violated by provisions, and the right of presentation has, therefore, devolved once more upon the Crown" (Sept. 26, 1343).*

So bold an assertion of a fact which never existed, is almost without a parallel. In the beginning of the Church, according to Edward, the Crown always conferred : an assertion not only groundless, but, as the hastiest retrospect would prove, directly contrary to the facts of the Anglo-Saxon period. In short, to any one who has reflected as he has read, the whole letter must bear upon its surface the proof of assertions, as reckless as they are untrue. This extravagant epistle was laid before the Pope by John of Shoreditch, a knight and professor of law. The Pope seems to have shown no kind of indignation. He merely replied that there were only two cases in which he had granted provisions to any but native-born subjects. "Holy Father," immediately exclaimed the knight, "you have given Perigord (Cardinal Talleyrand) a provision to the deanery of York, a person whom the king and

* Rymer, v. p. 385.

all the nobles of the realm of England consider a capital enemy of the king and kingdom" (A.D. 1343).*

Thus, then, the object both of the letter and embassy was merely to gratify a vindictive feeling against one, whose only fault appears to have been his zeal in endeavouring to procure what every good Christian must have longed for,—the termination of the ungodly strife between England and France.

The Pope took an opportunity in the following year (A.D. 1344) to make a firm remonstrance against the recent enactments themselves, as well as against the assumed power of making laws regarding "the reservations and provisions of churches." The king, he added, could scarcely be ignorant, that former popes had thus acted; nay, Edward had even himself procured the provisions which now, forgetting that the primacy of the Holy See over all the churches was from God, he actually assailed.†

Heedless of this remonstrance, Edward procured a succession of statutes against provisions, impeding their execution by the most rigorous punishments.

An act of a similar but less rigorous character had been passed under Edward I. This act being now read in parliament, another was drawn up and passed, declaring that the Pope had drawn to himself the seigniorship of benefices, giving them to various persons (foreigners among others), as if he were the patron. Were this to be suffered, the act concluded, not a little rashly, almost every benefice would soon be granted by such provisions: the elections would then fail; the works of charity would fail; and the king's council, deprived of its supply of learned clergy, would likewise fail.‡

"As then," the act continued, "such provisions have continued and increased, let it be hereby enacted, that if the king or the clergy be patrons of a benefice thus sus-

* Adam de Murim. pp. 152, 153, ed. of Eng. Hist. Soc.

† Ap. Raynaldi, an. 1344.

‡ "Le dit conseil périroit," &c.—25th Edward III. 1350. Compare also the earlier part of the act.

pended, the Crown shall for that time collate: if bishops or laymen be the patrons, let them present within a fixed term of six or seven months, or let the collation lapse to the Crown. If the persons presented by the regulations of the act, be hindered in any way by the provisors, then the provisors, and their various agents, shall be arrested and imprisoned, until they have both paid whatever fine the king may choose to impose, and have given surety that they will not sue at Rome or elsewhere, on account of their imprisonment, or any of its accompanying circumstances." If persons so hindering, could not be seized, they were to be outlawed; and if the provision was not to an abbey or other community, the king was to enjoy the profits of the said benefice (Feb. 1350).^{*} And this after all the parade about applications to charitable works, and such like. It is worthy of remark, that in this statute Edward calls himself the "advowee paramount immediate." Advowee being evidently the person having the right to present.

The above penalty of outlawry was extended, a few months later (Jan. 14, 1351), to all that procured such provisions at Rome: and in 1353 it was extended, with the addition of forfeiture, to all that sued at Rome, or elsewhere, in impeachment of any of the judgments of the king's court.[†] In January, 1364, it was further enacted, that any person suspected of obtaining citations or benefices from Rome, might be cited and held to bail, or if he refused to appear, was to incur the outlawry and forfeiture of the twenty-seventh of Edward III.[‡]

It is remarkable that the latter part of this act requires that the king, prelates, nobles, commons, clergymen, and laymen, be bound to aid, comfort, and counsel one another; and, by all possible means, to resist such offenders.

^{*} Statutes of the Realm: stat. of Carlisle and stat. 4th of 25 Edw. III.

[†] Stat. 5th of 25 Edw. III. c. 22; also 27 Edw. III.

[‡] Stat. 2nd of 38 Edw. III.

These statutes became henceforth known not only as statutes of Provisors, but also of Præmunire; this last word being the commencement of a writ issued just before the opening of the prosecution.

The Pope did not remain indifferent at this succession of hostile statutes, or think that he had done enough by his remonstrance in 1344.

Edward, in 1351, seized several benefices, under pretence that they were held by cardinals and other non-residents. Not to reside is a fault against the canons, and is a fault only because of the omission of the duties attached to the benefice: its punishment belongs not to the secular but to the ecclesiastical power. Edward, therefore, in pretending to take cognizance of such a fault, was intruding into another's province. There might be, moreover, no fault: a good reason, such as study, appeals, or the necessary administration of some branch of general church government, might have procured a valid dispensation.

All this the Pope pointed out, threatening Edward with excommunication if he did not refrain from touching benefices, or impeding cardinals and others, or their procurators, when presented by the Holy See, and if, within four months, he did not make full restitution. As, however, the king despatched envoys with ample promises, and as the Pope died soon after, the cardinals prolonged the term to the following Ascension; adding that, the king and all his ministers who might be engaged in impeding the provisions, unless they amended during the assigned term, were *ipso facto* excommunicated.*

Among various objectionable terms introduced into these laws of Provisors, one is, the studied manner in which Rome is mentioned as a "foreign court;" such an expression being a continued appeal to the overweening prejudices of an island race.

It is one of the consequences of the Fall, and of the pride at the Tower of Babel, that the family of Adam,

* Ap. Raynaldi, an. 1352, No. 17, &c.

instead of being one, is broken up into fragments or nationalities. The Church, in some measure, remedied this evil: it is, within itself, essentially one. Its children may be of every tongue, of every complexion, but its children they still remain. They are, therefore, brothers; members of one family, "members one of another." In jurisdiction, and in all other ecclesiastical matters, there is not, and cannot be, anything "foreign." The term foreign is as inapplicable in church matters as it is between blood relatives in ordinary family matters. Those Catholics that apply the term foreign to any part of the Church, much more to Christ's Vicar on earth, have lost the real meaning of "communion of saints;" and are not only insulting to their spiritual Father, but are assuming as their own that peculiar badge of separation, which characterizes all who are outside the pale of the Church.

It is not, indeed, surprising that the men who banished St. Anselm and martyred St. Thomas, nor that others who ostentatiously followed their maxims, should have adopted such an expression. To them, grievously lax in their morals, and clinging, as they did, to the things of this world at the expense too often of principle and every good feeling, it is no wonder that the Church was something perfectly foreign. Their notions, caught up from the first Norman kings, developed from age to age, until their natural but frightful result in the schism of Henry VIII. and the sanguinary persecution of Elizabeth.

It is mournful to see how courtier-like in all these royal encroachments is the tone of several of the brief chroniclers of that age. These writers knew what abuses the secular power occasionally sheltered, and yet they reserved all their jealousy for that which religion ought to have taught them to confide in and venerate. One fact (one probably of a thousand), quoted by the continuator of Murimuth, ought to have made him pause. When Urban V. became Pope, he published a

constitution against pluralities. "It was, however," says the continuator, "of little avail, because clergymen thus promoted, relying on the favour and help of the barons, did not suffer it to produce its effect."*

These Acts of Parliament did not prevent Innocent, on the one hand, either from requiring and obtaining from the English clergy the travelling expenses of the two cardinals, Talleyrand and Nicholas, who had been sent, immediately after the battle of Poitiers, to renew the efforts so often made for peace; or, on the other hand, from bestowing, by provision and reservations, not only the lesser benefices and dignities, but also the bishoprics; those, namely, of Ely, Lichfield, Chichester, St. Asaph's, Llandaff, and St. David's. When, moreover, the enemies of Innocent had seized a large portion of his dominions, and his treasure was exhausted in their defence, he still appealed to the English; and they, with the filial attachment which the far greater part of them had invariably shown, voted for him a "tenth," amounting to one hundred thousand florins.†

Urban V., the next Pope, continued both to make use of provisions, and to intercede for peace, with no less resolution than his predecessor (A.D. 1370). He was preparing for a journey to Flanders, for the express purpose of making a personal effort for peace, when he was surprised by death. His successor, Gregory XI., meets English envoys at Bruges. The latter spoke of the provisors; and requested that collegiate and cathedral churches, as well as monasteries, should, "according to ancient practice," choose their own prelates, "without appeal or hindrance." Gregory, before giving a decisive answer, sent them back with letters to the king and nobles, requiring their replies to certain heads.

A parliament being summoned, decreed, that for

* Page 197, an. 1362.

† Contin. of Murim. an. 1373, &c.; Nich. Harps. from the Register of Archbishop Simon Islip, p. 511; and Raynaldi, 1374 (for the Pope's letter).

the future the elections to bishoprics should be free and untouched. The king, at the same time, took an oath that he would not interfere in such elections, but with all his strength would help and advance them.*

If this oath were religiously observed, the very reason for which the Pope had so frequently annulled the elections to the episcopal sees would be removed. It was generally to check the king's interference, and the evil consequences of such interference, that the popes had of late so frequently put aside the first elections. The Holy See, therefore, on such a condition would readily promise to waive its own rights; and if the chapters, in the free exercise of their choice, were to present an unworthy candidate, some other remedy short of a provisor would be sufficient: therefore, after a stay of about two years at Bruges, the Pope promised to abstain from provisions to episcopal sees, and the king to refrain from conferring benefices by writs of "*Quare impedit*" (A.D. 1375). Still, however, the questions arising from the last-mentioned statute remained under discussion, and to all appearance were never completed. The severity of the laws against those that accepted provisions, gradually eliminated the custom from England. Gradually, at the same time, the royal authority, despite of Edward's oath, supplanted the rights of the various bodies of electors. The papal provisions had often been granted to check the usurping power of the Crown: the king's nominee being generally received by the mean-spirited electors,

* "*Sed ficulneum et fragile fuit istud decretum, et in ipso, ut ita dicam, partu suffocatum,*" adds Harpsfeld. "Provisiones vero illæ sensim ab Anglia prorsus exclusæ sunt, propter legum adversus eos, qui illarum beneficio uterentur, severitatem et immanitatem. Et pedetentim nihilominus omnem, in hujusmodi episcoporum optionibus, collegii suffragationem, regia auctoritas suo arbitrio gubernabat; ut adumbrata potius electionis species et nomen inane, quam constans ulla et solida electio deinceps usurparetur."—(Harps. p. 512, Douay, 1622.) Harpsfeld's position, as archdeacon of Canterbury at the time of the Reformation, gives great weight to this assertion. The scanty histories of the time referred to fully corroborate his statement. The beginning of this interference, not as an exception, but as a rule, is fixed by Gerald Cambrensis in the reign of Henry II.

the papal provisions were the real bulwarks of freedom of election. This being destroyed, the forms of election became by degrees but an empty name. As the elections, however, were not valid until ratified by the Holy See, it may, perhaps, appear that the popes were wanting to their duty. This would be a hasty conclusion. It would, perhaps, considering the circumstances of the time, be the less evil to ratify such elections; but, after all, the popes, whenever they saw occasion, as not unfrequently happened, still annulled the election and presented to the sees, as if no statute existed.

CHAPTER LVI.

RELIGIOUS UNITY OF ENGLAND—CAUSES TENDING TO INFRINGE IT
 —WICKLIFFE—THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS AND THE UNIVERSITY OF
 OXFORD—WICKLIFFE'S DEFEAT—LEARNING AND HOLINESS OF THE
 FRIARS OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY—THE SPIRITUALS—BULLS
 OF NICHOLAS III. AND JOHN XXII.—FALL OF CESENA, OCCAM, ETC.
 —THE FRATRICELLI—THE BEGUINES—LOUIS OF BAVARIA—FITZ-
 RALPH OF ARMAGH—WICKLIFFE'S POOR PRIESTS.

FOR seven hundred years the whole of England had now been united in one faith and communion with the Holy See. If pagans or heretics had ever visited its shores, it was only to quit them speedily or soon to abjure their errors. The Jew, indeed, was allowed to remain; but his very features, no less than his dress, and his distinctive badge of yellow felt, marked him out as a stranger in the land. The native race itself had for seven centuries been faithful to its first grace of conversion. The bell that echoed in the Forest of Dean spoke of the same rites that caught, with their midnight chant, the ear of Canute, on the waters of Ely. When Alfred was founding his monasteries, or Athelstan the Conqueror, after the victory of Brunanburgh, was redeeming his pledge at the altar of St. John of Beverley, they were doing what was applauded and often imitated by every one of their successors. When the victors of the Battle of the Standard fought beneath the Blessed Sacrament, as the sanction of their just defence, they were inspired by the same feelings that had reared, in homage to the same adorable presence, the thousands of pinnacled towers that were the wonder and glory of the land. Each revolving Easter, too, saw every one who was not a notorious sinner approaching the same penitential but consoling tribunal, previous to partaking of the same immaculate Lamb.

Such was the happy unity of England. Wars might rage, vicious kings might distress, plague and famine might add their terrors, but the consolations of religion were alike to all : no contradiction in faith, no dissension in discipline.

The unhappy time was now arrived when this harmony was to be disturbed. The feeling of ill-grounded jealousy of the Holy See, which evil princes had with some success attempted to engraft upon the nation, was not without fruit : that numerous class of writers that fawns upon its patrons and colours the truth to their fancy, was already beginning to speak of the Holy Father and the Holy See in a strain unknown to the times before the Conquest, and almost equally unknown until the close of the thirteenth century. If historians could busily pick up every tale, or, in default of such materials, could attribute evil motives, poets, like Chaucer, and some others, could more easily draw from their teeming and sometimes licentious imaginations.*

From disrespect, however slight, there is but one step to open disobedience. Had there not already been this wilfully nurtured jealousy, there perhaps would have been no schism and heresy to mark the close of the fourteenth century, and if not substantially to injure, at least to mar the beautiful structure that had been the joint work of seven hundred years : Wickliffe would have found no sympathizing patrons ; and even the disappointment that is said to have stung him to action would have probably died in his own breast, or, at least, would have produced no public effect. As it was, however, his first acts of revolt were for a time befriended by a few powerful men ;

* “ Woe is me : woe is me,” was Chaucer’s dying exclamation, as he thought of the licentiousness of his writings.

Amongst the historical writers of the fourteenth century, Avesbury, Murimuth, and his continuator, betray an occasional tone of dissatisfaction regarding the Holy See very inadequate to their alleged reasons. This generally displays itself in matters connected with the Crown ; and the Crown, even without examination, is, of course, with these unreflecting chroniclers, always right.

and when this support was withdrawn, a new sect was already formed, which continued more or less numerous, until the national defection in the time of Henry VIII.

John Wickliffe was a secular priest, and an eminent professor of theology. After having been fellow of Merton and master of Baliol College, he became, for a time, the warden of Canterbury Hall. The Oxford historian perceives in Wickliffe's defeat in an appeal to Rome, the beginning of his antipathy both to the Holy See, and to the monks who had been his competitors.

The particulars of this appeal are as follows. In December, 1365, Wickliffe was appointed warden of Canterbury Hall, then recently founded by Archbishop Islip, and now united to Christchurch College.* By some means, not known, he thus supplanted Woodhall, the first warden. Woodhall was a monk of Christchurch, Canterbury, and, conformably to the statutes of Islip, had been elected with two others, and presented to the archbishop, by the prior and convent of Christchurch. Of the three thus presented, Islip chose Woodhall (A.D. 1362). The latter, being afterwards shut out by Wickliffe, appealed to the Holy See.†

What, probably, encouraged Wickliffe in this proceeding, was a controversy already existing between the friars and the university, the latter being displeased to see some of its chosen youth become Dominicans or Franciscans. Their view of the matter was assuredly very narrow. If their youth sought perfection, the end of their being, in the way approved by the Church, they ought to have rejoiced. The feeling of jealousy, but too natural in such cases, so far prevailed, as to

* See Lew. Life of W. Collec. of Records, No. 3, &c.

† Knight. an. 1382; Harpsf.; Gutch's Wood's History and Ant. Oxf.: Annals, 1369, &c. vol. i. This contest has been questioned on the ground that another priest, named John de Wickliffe, appears to have been then living.—(Vaughan's Wick. p. 53, and App. C.) Vaughan himself can see no reasonable ground for doubting that it was the famous John Wickliffe that was ejected.

make them think it reasonable to withhold their assent until the young persons were at least eighteen. If in this they sought the advice of the Holy See, subjecting their inclinations to proper authority, they might have acted with a clear conscience. Instead of this, they appealed to parliament; and obtained not only its sanction, such as it was, but its prohibition to carry the matter to Rome. The friars and monks, on the other hand, generally made common cause, and this the more at present, because the monks no less than the friars were attacked by the university; for the latter had refused to admit religious to take degrees in arts, and yet made it necessary by its statutes to take such degrees before receiving the professorship of theology. The monks had therefore appealed to Rome, and obtained, if otherwise proved to be capable, a dispensation from the statute. All this, together with the infirmities of Islip, who was now a paralytic, and his death soon after the grant to Wickliffe, and before the new hall was firmly established, presented a combination of circumstances sufficient to prepare, if not to account for, the change already referred to in the wardenship.

Soon, however, Simon de Mepham, Islip's successor, afterwards created cardinal, charged Wickliffe with notorious waste; and sequestrated the revenues. The question, as well as that of Woodhall's ejection, was carried to Rome, where both parties pleaded as usual. A cardinal having been sent to England to investigate the facts, and to decide the question, and to make the hall one either of seculars only or of religious only, the result was, that Wickliffe was ejected, and the Pope's sentence enforced by the king.*

The Dominican and Franciscan friars, of whom mention has been so often made, were established at the beginning of the previous century; were fully approved, as all religious orders must be, by the Holy

* See the history of these proceedings in a letter of Urban V. ap. Lewis, Nos. 8, 9, 10, &c.; Rolls of Parl. of Edw. III. vol. ii. p. 290; Birchington; ap. Wharton, i. p. 46.

See; and were giving to all Christendom an example of a total renunciation of all earthly goods. Other religious orders, like the early Christians, possessed all things in common, without any individual or private rights; but the friars aspired to a yet more literal fulfilment of the call of Christ; "unless a man renounce all he hath:" they held no other possessions than their poor houses, and in some cases a pittance of land, having nothing either individually or in common, and humbled themselves not only to manual labour, but even to the state of beggars, for the sake of Him "who had not a place in which to lay his head." Men of the highest families abandoned their titles to join these orders, so contemptible to the world, so glorious in the eyes of their crucified God. They were institutions well fitted for the time: from the eastern frontiers of Hungary to the Atlantic, and from the Dofrefeld mountains to Sicily and Malta, the whole population, with very few exceptions, was Catholic, and in the true Catholic spirit, was devoted to the Holy See. The friars, approved by the Holy See, and engaged in preaching, study, and in general instruction, were sure to meet with sympathizing support from so vast, so generally devout a population. When, three centuries later, the miscalled Reformation had done its unhappy work, and the Catholics of the North had become few and poor, it might be a suitable time to adapt the rule of the friars to the change of circumstances. For the present, however, the good brothers were numerous, and for the far greater part, were learned and zealous, the crown of the priesthood, the right hand of the episcopate, the miracle of Christendom.

In the presence of such men as St. Dominic, St. Francis, Albert the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure, and St. Hyacinth, even envy itself was almost reduced to silence. Their paintings full of high art and exquisite devotion, their works of every kind, from mathematics and medicine to philosophy and theology, mark them out to those even that

do but rapidly examine them, as men of gigantic proportions both in intellect and love of God. Whilst England, in common with all Catholic Europe, admired them, she was proud to count amongst her own sons, such friars as the historian Nicholas Trivet; the philosopher Roger Bacon, surnamed "the Admirable Doctor;" the theologian Alexander Hales, "the Irrefragable Doctor;" and such bishops, foremost in the science of the day, no less than in all the branches of theology, as Robert Kilwardby and John of Peckham.

In so glorious a presence, envy was overawed, but not entirely silent. It was checked by the calm reasonings of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure; but only awaited an opportunity. A few years later, the opportunity presented itself: the disobedience of some Franciscans not only brought down upon the entire order the undeserved censure of inconsiderate or malicious men, but even prepared the way for the fatal success of Wickliffe's heresy. Some of the brotherhood, not perceiving the secret pride into which they were falling, adopted the name of "Spirituals," to distinguish themselves from the rest; blamed the others for wearing clothes neither sufficiently worn and patched, nor sufficiently short, as well as for storing up some amount of food; and, at last, despising alike the commands of their superiors and the efforts of the Pope to persuade them to obey, withdrew to Sicily, and nominated new superiors. "Pride goes before a fall:" they soon affixed to their schism its usual seal of heresy. They asserted that there were two churches; one endowed with earthly wealth but squalid before God, the other poor before men but rich in virtue. The former, they dared to say, was the Church of Rome; the latter church was their own community.

A question, meantime, had arisen amongst the whole body of the Franciscans: it was whether Christ or his Apostles had possessed any property either in common or individually. Nicholas III., in the year

1279, had checked some opponents of the order, by defining, that to abandon all property, both in common and individually, was praiseworthy, and conformable to the example of Christ and his Apostles. He added, however, that Christ did, indeed, allow a purse to be carried for their common use; and here there appeared room for starting the above question, which soon became a general subject of discussion.

To put an end to this controversy, as well as check the so-called Spirituals, John XXII., by a special bull, allowed the friars to store up food for use. On the other hand, he declared, that as the Holy Scriptures state that Christ and his Apostles did possess something, knowingly and wilfully to hold the contrary, would of course be heretical. Before, however, he had completed the examination which always precedes a papal definition, and at a time when it was well known that he had written for the opinions of the most learned men in every part of the Church, Michael de Cesena, the general of the Franciscans, presumed to anticipate him, and summoning a general chapter of the order, and interpreting inexactly the definition of Pope Nicholas III., presumed to issue a declaration that Christ and his Apostles possessed nothing, either individually or in common.

When the Pope's definition was, at last, made and promulgated, the unhappy general had not the humility to submit.* He could not even allege, in excuse for his disobedience, that he disbelieved the personal infallibility of the Pope, for he saw that John's definition was not opposed by the Church at large. Instead, however, of abandoning his own views, he took refuge with the schismatical Louis of Bavaria. Occam, the provincial of the English Franciscans, was amongst

* For a comparison and elucidation of the definitions of John and Nicholas, see Natalis Alex.'s able and dispassionate defence of John XXII. For a more accurate account of the distinction between dominion and use than could be given in the text, and for the full question regarding those perishable articles, the use of which seems to include dominion, see Billuart's "*De Jure et Justitiâ*."

the few that abetted his resistance, and accompanied him to the imperial court.

In 1329, Cesena, Occam, and others, were unanimously condemned in a general chapter of their own order, and were branded as manifest apostates. In the same chapter, the decisions of John were reverently acknowledged and received.*

Of the men thus excommunicated, some in the course of time, and apparently amongst the rest Occam, the English Franciscan, submitted and did penance; others hardened themselves the more, and, proceeding from one evil to another, broke into open blasphemy against the Church. One of them, Peter John Oliva, poured out every kind of vituperation upon the Holy See, applying to it all the epithets bestowed by the Apocalypse upon the enemies of God. Just as Christ was rejected by the synagogue, so, he impiously said, the rule of St. Francis was rejected by the Church of the proud and carnal-minded. This man became the leader of the petty sect of the Fratricelli.

Amongst his followers was Peter de Macerata. This man and some others had obtained a dispensation from St. Celestine V. to withdraw from their brethren and observe the rule of St. Francis, in the state of hermits. This dispensation Boniface VIII. recalled. Well did these hermits know that the renunciation of one's own will is far more acceptable to God than that of property and comfort. Every other denial is intended to produce and strengthen this self-sacrifice in order that the soul may be free to cling to God's ever adorable will. Unhappily, contending, according to their own views, for the letter, they lost sight of the spirit of their rule. They uttered invectives against the superiors and the whole body of the conventual Franciscans; despised the voice of Clement V., no less than of his predecessor, Boniface VIII.; and at last, flying to the court of Louis of Bavaria, hesitated not to maintain that Oliva, the declared enemy of the

* Contin. of Will. Nang's Chron. an. 1329; Raynaldi's Contin. of Baron Fleury, an. 1279, and *passim*.

Holy See, had received his doctrine from the Holy Ghost.

These men, having joined the Fratricelli, speedily united with the kindred, if not identical, sect of the Beguines. The Beguines, as a sect, arose amongst some of the religious order, or rather community, of the same name. This community of pious women was founded, as some maintain, about the beginning of the seventh century, but, according to others, by Lambert "Le Begue," at the end of the twelfth century. At all events, some of its members, forgetting both decorum and humility, began to teach; and to teach, too, that a soul absorbed in the love of God could yield without blame whatever nature craved. This principle must remind forcibly of the Quietists of the seventeenth century, as well as of many a modern sect. It led to every kind of evil. Some were soon to be found who, yielding to the innate pride of fallen nature, and "esteeming themselves just," worked themselves into the idea that they were absorbed in God's holy love, and then, with little or no remorse, wallowed miserably in every kind of sensual filthiness.

Such was the fall of a few amongst the Beguines and Franciscans; and such their wretched union around the throne of Louis of Bavaria. When Louis was excommunicated, as early as 1324, by John XXII., he had already begun to assemble this motley band, and found many a hireling pen prepared not only to undertake his defence, but to advance against the Church the most extravagant assertions.

Marsilius de Menandrino of Padua, and John Gandunus of Perusina, in their effusion, termed "The Defender of Peace," asserted, that the Church could not hold temporal property, and that its goods were at the full disposal of the emperor; that Christ, when ascending to heaven, left on earth no visible head of the Church, nor gave to Peter any power greater than he gave to the other Apostles; that the authority and jurisdiction of bishops did not exceed that of priests;

that it was the emperor's right to appoint, punish, and remove bishops, to distribute benefices, coerce by means of the excommunication of the clergy, approve religious orders, hold councils, decree fasts and holidays, and grant dispensations.

This was only a circumlocution for saying that Christ had left on earth a visible head of the Church; and that that head was, not St. Peter's successor, but the emperor. It was the open avowal, the full development, of all that Constantius, Henry IV. of Germany, Rufus of England, and many another scourge of his people and enemy of the Church, had sought, but failed to attain. Louis was equally unsuccessful. A fugitive from Italy, where he had actually doomed the Pope to the scaffold, he met a sudden death in his own country, falling dead from his horse in a grand hunting expedition near Munich; and with him perished the schismatical party to which his influence had given a brief importance (A.D. 1347).

After so deplorable a fall and schism, rash or ill-disposed men could now assail, not indeed with greater reason, but with greater plausibility, the whole system of the mendicant orders. Amongst the infirmities of the mind is its proneness to extremes: men that were zealous for the Holy See, from their indignation at the misconduct of a few Franciscans, would be apt to speak intemperately of the great principle of perfection practised by the friars, and thus, unthinkingly, to oppose the Holy See, which had expressly sanctioned that principle, and which they themselves so greatly honoured.*

It was probably from some such feeling that Fitz-Ralph, the archbishop of Armagh, yielded to a strong display of feeling in his unseasonable contest with the friars of his metropolitan town. It appears certain, however, that he asserted, at last, whilst preaching at St. Paul's, that their voluntary poverty was unlawful.

* Raynal. Contin. of Baron. *passim*.

He added, that Christ alone was in the state of original innocence, and was, therefore, the only just possessor of any kind of property; and that, on the other hand, although Christ had ceded his right of possession, no one in mortal sin could be a lawful possessor of anything.

A clamour immediately arose. Writings were busily circulated, and conferences were held, and Fitz-Ralph himself was summoned before the Pope. He had already, in his writings, submitted implicitly to the correction of Holy Church; and, therefore, although his propositions were condemned, he escaped censure, and was merely enjoined silence upon the topics condemned. He died soon after, while still upon the continent.*

This bishop had been Chancellor of Oxford. It would hardly, therefore, be surprising if, during the discussions that followed his unfortunate sermons, some of his friends in that university were to espouse his cause. This actually took place, and amongst such champions John Wickliffe, it is said, made himself particularly conspicuous. This appears to have been his first opportunity for displaying openly his love of new opinions; if so, his subsequent contest for the wardenship of Canterbury Hall merely spurred him on in the career thus accidentally opened.

At first the friars were the only objects of his attacks. These attacks were not distinct, carefully-worded, accusations, but sweeping assertions, so unhesitatingly uttered, and so frequently reiterated, as to produce (as usual in all ages) a strong impression upon careless livers, or unreflecting hearers. He declared that they were guilty of fifty heresies, stating vaguely, amongst other reproaches, that a life supported by begging was a life contrary to the

* Contin. of Murim. 1358 and 1359; and Wals. Hist. Ang. See also Wadding. iv. p. 62; and the life prefixed to Thomas of Walden or Waldensis's Doct. Antiq. Fidei; Venice, 1571. Thomas of Walden was born in the middle of the fourteenth century, and was an illustrious defender of the Church against the Lollards.

maxims of the Gospel. When asked how it was, then, that Christ lived—whether by labour, by miracle, or by alms,—the poor man, as hasty in these assertions as he was shallow, replied, that, after all, the friars did not live by alms, but by misrepresentations. His attacks, after his expulsion from Canterbury Hall, extended from the friars to the bishops, monks, and secular clergy. He even got up a sort of new order of his own: an order of poor priests. To these he gave a habit closely resembling that of the friars themselves: a long coarse russet gown, tied about the waist with a cord. The feet were bare. If by this resemblance he meant to deceive people into the belief that they were listening to genuine friars, it was a crafty piece of generalship. The people, however, were not easily to be imposed upon by such appearances: they soon marked out Wickliffe's followers by the epithet of Lollards. These Lollards he told to go and preach. In all such cases the Catholic rule is, to obtain the bishop's leave: "How can they preach unless they be sent?" This, however, Wickliffe took upon himself to dispense with. He enjoined, moreover, that they should hold no benefice. He took care, however, to keep his own benefice, the rectory of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire.*

In this frame of mind, he soon began to fall into assertions that savoured of anything but "the sound form of words." Gradually, as his doctrines became developed, it grew more and more evident that one of its chief principles was, that *dominion* is founded on *grace*; that no one, in other words, can lawfully hold any kind of possession, who is not in God's grace. This is a very convenient doctrine for those that fix a longing eye upon their neighbour's goods. What a pity that Jezabel did not set up a title to be in God's grace, and the poor widow to have lost grace; what a comfortable method of invasion!

What, however, was the invasion which Wickliffe

* Wals. A.D. 1377; Murim.'s Contin. 1376; Lel.'s Collect. vol. ii. p. 409.

instigated? It was that of the tithes, and all other possessions of the clergy; and the reason alleged by him was, that by not imitating Christ's poverty they had lost grace, and, therefore, dominion. But if their property were seized, would not the rectory of Lutterworth be in danger? Perhaps Wickliffe had not thought of that. Perhaps, again, as would indeed appear from his writings, he thought himself in grace. Certain it is, at all events, that he would have rejoiced to see the clergy reduced to beggary; and whatever his motive, certain it is that he had quarrelled with clergy of all orders, and poured out upon their heads invectives that told of anything but forgiveness.*

* See the quotations in Lewis, chap. iii. pp. 34, 37, 40, &c. (Oxford, 1820); and Harpsfeld's Hist. Wycliffiana, c. i.

CHAPTER LVII.

PARTIES AT THE CLOSE OF THE REIGN OF EDWARD III.—ADVICE AND DEATH OF PEMBROKE—EXPOSTULATION OF GREGORY XI. UPON THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE ENGLISH PRELATES—WICKLIFFE EXAMINED IN ST. PAUL'S—AGAIN AT LAMBETH—SUMMARY OF HIS ERRORS—REVOLT OF THE PEASANTRY—ZEAL OF COURTNEY, THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY—PROCEEDINGS AGAINST WICKLIFFE'S CHIEF ABETTORS—WICKLIFFE'S PETITION TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—LANCASTER ABANDONS HIM—HIS RECONTANTION AND DEATH—VIOLENCE OF HIS FOLLOWERS—PETITION OF THE TWO HOUSES—COURTNEY'S VISITATION—NEW TENETS AND INFLAMMATORY LIBELS OF THE LOLLARDS—THE LAW "DE COMBURENDO HERETICO"—OTHER PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT—SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE—FORGERIES AT OXFORD.

TOWARDS the close of the long and calamitous reign of Edward III., a reign marked by four great victories, but scourged by heavy taxes, repeated pestilence, and many reverses, two parties appeared as rivals in the government. Edward was growing old; but enfeebled though he was in body and mind, he yet clung to the unlawful pleasures of his unbridled youth. In proportion as he shut himself up more and more within his palace, his third son, the duke of Lancaster, more prominently appeared as the virtual ruler of the nation. The Black Prince, Edward's eldest son, was in France, sinking under a prolonged illness. When he returned to England, and heard complaints on all sides of the extravagance and incapacity of the government, he supported from his distant retirement the efforts of the opposition.

His return was at first of no advantage to the popular cause; and was even followed by a decided advantage on the part of Lancaster (A.D. 1371). The Treasurer and the Chancellor, who were bishops, and
 • the Keeper of the Privy Seal, the famous architect

William of Wickham, then archdeacon of Lincoln,* seem to have thwarted Lancaster's projects; but were now, at length, defeated, and forced to yield up their offices to laymen. Had this been done in order to set them free for their sacred duties, it would have been a good work. We are, however, assured by a contemporary that the real motive was "hatred to the Church."† Coupling this testimony with Lancaster's well-known patronage of Wickliffe, it would scarcely be rash to suppose that the duke, finding the clergy amongst his opponents, sought to strengthen his own party by the addition of all those who favoured Wickliffe's invectives. This conjecture acquires fresh probability from a proposition against the clergy which was made by the earl of Pembroke, one of Lancaster's adherents, a young man equally famed for valour and for profligacy. The earl proposed to Edward, "always to tax the clergy in time of war more heavily than the rest" of his subjects. This advice, the same contemporary adds, was agreeable to Lancaster and his party, but it was found impracticable. The disasters which soon after overwhelmed the earl were considered at the time as the visible judgment of God, both for this advice and for the earl's notorious immorality.

In the following summer, the earl was encountered in the roads of Rochelle by a powerful Spanish fleet. After a violent combat for two entire days, he was defeated, with the loss of his treasure and of every single ship. Wounded and taken prisoner, he was at last allowed to return, but died before he was able to embark for England.‡

* William of Wickham founded a noble college at Oxford, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and the statutes of which became a model for the subsequent foundations of even such men as Bishop Wainflete. To supply the college with students well known and tried, and provided with the indispensable foundation of solid grammatical training, William founded the school at Winchester, which became the model of Henry VI.'s school at Eton.—Whart. Ang. S. v. ii.; and Harpsf. p. 553.

† "In odium ecclesiæ."—Murim.'s Contin. p. 210.

‡ Ib. pp. 212, 219, &c.; Walsingham; Harpsf. Hist. Wicel. c. i.

Four years after these calamities, the opposition suddenly prevailed, the "Good Parliament," as it was termed, removing Lancaster, Lord Latimer, and others, and enacting "that certain bishops, and earls, and other praiseworthy lords, should rule the king and kingdom" (A.D. 1376). Alice Pierce, the king's mistress, was named expressly in the list of those that were to be removed: she had not blushed to sit in open court upon the bench of justice, overawing the judges; and she tampered notoriously with the affairs of state. She was, therefore, summarily accused and dismissed.

Before these enactments could be completely enforced, the Black Prince expired. Lancaster's party immediately rallied, won their way back to office, and marked their contempt of liberty and public spirit by imprisoning the speaker of the House of Commons, and stripping William of Wickham, now bishop of Winchester, not only of his office of chancellor, but of his temporalities. Alice Pierce, the execration of a Christian people, and its disgrace in the eyes of foreigners, was allowed to return to the palace.

The days of Edward, however, were waning fast. His wretched mistress, perceiving the near approach of death, stole the very ring from his finger, and went her way. A priest had but just time to bid him prepare for judgment, before he breathed his last.

Lancaster was now more firmly seated than ever at the head of the government. The opposition, however, aroused by the repeated descents of the French, forced him to submit to parliament an account of the government expenditure. The duke, on the other hand, as if to annoy those whom he could not defeat, made an open parade of his support of Wickliffe.* The rash assertions of the latter had attracted the attention of the Holy See. Gregory XI., hearing much of what was passing, yet receiving no official intimation, wrote to Simon of Sudbury, the archbishop of Canter-

* Murim.'s Contin. and Walsing. Upodig. Neustr.; "Ricardi II.," by a contemporary monk of Evesham.

bury, and also to the bishop of London, enclosing a copy of certain opinions, stated to be those of Wickliffe; declaring that these opinions had the taint of the condemned propositions of Marsilius of Padua, and John Gandunus of Perusina; commanding them to examine Wickliffe, and to send the result of their investigation to Rome; and both reminding them of the learning and zeal of the English bishops of former times, and expressing regret for the supineness which their successors were now displaying (May, 1377).

Aroused by this urgent command, the two prelates summoned Wickliffe to appear in person before them. A dense crowd thronged to witness the proceedings. When Wickliffe made his appearance, instead of entering humbly and alone, as befitted a priest thus called before his superiors, he came escorted with the pomp and power of the world, being accompanied by Lord Percy the earl marshal, and by the duke of Lancaster himself. The bearing and expressions of the two noblemen little suited the house of God or the presence of their spiritual fathers, being evidently intended to overawe. Some of the duke's words to the bishop of London, being overheard, so provoked the people that they flew to arms, and would have taken the duke's life, but for the bishop's interference.

At the close of the proceedings, Wickliffe received an injunction to be silent for the future upon all such topics.*

* Walsing. 1377 and 1378. The actual order both of dates and facts is, unfortunately, in the beginning of Wickliffe's career, by no means so clear as could be wished. The continuator of Murimuth, a contemporary, here assigns the year 1376, or rather accumulates his whole account of Wickliffe within that year, and whilst he thus withholds the dates, he is "frequently," as Hogg, his editor, states, "careless in recording facts" (Pref., end). Walsingham, who died about 1440, in this part of his history generally copies the continuator; whilst Harpsfeld, generally speaking, adopts the same sequence of events, resting this part of his "*Historia Wycliffiana*" almost entirely upon Walsingham.

It should be added, that when Walsingham collects the facts of different years regarding Wickliffe, he accumulates them, unfortunately, without any discrimination of dates. Knighton, who was

He obeyed for a few months, but beginning again to maintain his errors, the archbishop of Canterbury at once convened a synod in his palace at Lambeth. Wickliffe was summoned, and declared himself willing to submit to the correction of Holy Church. When some of his propositions were quoted, he explained them away in a manner equally ingenious and unsatisfactory. He had said that "charters of *perpetual* inheritance could not be given even by God himself." Perpetual, he now said, referred to the state of things in eternity, after the Day of Judgment; although he well knew that the said charters were already existing on earth. He had said that if there were a God, temporal lords might lawfully and meritoriously take away worldly goods from a delinquent church. His explanation now was, if God commanded them. He had said that God could not grant the Pope and others the power of binding and loosing at pleasure. He now declared, after darkening the sense by a multitude of cumbrous words, that he by no means intended to deny the authority of the Pope and bishops, or that they held, as representing the person of Christ, the power of binding and loosing.

This explanation, strained as it was, was admitted by the two bishops; and Wickliffe's only punishment, on declaring that he submitted humbly to the correction of Holy Church, was a command to be silent upon some points, and more precise upon others.

It is not easy to discover the cause of so lenient, not to call it so weak, a sentence. It is true that the Pope who had urged them to their duty had just died; it is true also that there was a disorderly mob outside the gates, and even intruding into the chapel; and equally so, that Lewis Clifford dared, in the name, it appears, of the Princess of Wales, to forbid them to

a close observer of what was passing, has omitted altogether the last ten years of Edward III. When at last he takes up the story, it is after the insurrection of Wat the Tyler. He turns back, indeed, to trace out the history of Wickliffe from its commencement; but he, too, no less than Walsingham, omits the dates.

pronounce sentence; but it is almost unprecedented that two prelates could so easily have surrendered duty to fear.*

Wickliffe retired; and instead of being silent, became more bold than ever, both in organizing his "poor priests," and in diffusing his doctrines.

Of the nature of these doctrines, some knowledge may have been gleaned from the previous narrative; but a more exact account may still be useful. It is not, however, intended to reduce them either to a complete or to a self-consistent body. Such a task would be simply impossible, from the impenetrable obscurity and occasional contradictions that deform some parts of his writings.

He professed unbounded veneration for the Church during the first thousand years of its existence; but, like the heresiarchs of all ages, he despised the Church actually existing. He dared to say that after the first thousand years the Great Dragon had been let loose, and had prevailed against the Church, in faith no less than in morality and discipline. Even so, however, he still held the Pope to be the Vicar of Christ.

He condemned the religious orders for impeding, as he said, the observance of God's commandments.

He inveighed against ceremonies, and, still more, against indulgences and pilgrimages.

He laid down such a doctrine of predestination, that free will could not coexist with it.

He admitted, however, the efficacy of the Blessed Virgin's intercession; as well as seven sacraments; but whilst he maintained the efficacy of the mass for Christian souls both on earth and in purgatory, he held, at least in some of his writings, the real presence of Christ along with the real presence of the substance of the bread.†

* Walsing. Hist. Angl. pp. 191, &c. 201, &c.; Lewis, p. 58, &c.

† Compare his Dialogues, sometimes quoted as the Trialogues, with the account given by his contemporaries, and especially by Knighton (pp. 2648—2659), who, being a canon of Leicester, in the county where Wickliffe's own living was, and where Wickliffe's fol-

It is not easy to trace the effect of these doctrines upon the multitude; but in Wat the Tyler's insurrection, which now broke out, the busy presence of some of Wickliffe's itinerant preachers, aided if it did not produce, the general insubordination. Such teaching, however, would have done but little, were it not for various predisposing causes.

As early as the time of the great pestilence (Dec. 1348, to May, 1349), the lower orders had become weary of the servitude of feudalism. Fearfully thinning the population, and interrupting law, business, and all the general duties of society, that pestilence had driven the mass of serfs from their homes. Bread or flight from the plague might have been their first objects; but they learned to prize, and, despite of the efforts of parliaments, strove to retain their newly-acquired liberty.* This feeling was no doubt nurtured in the freedom of camps, during the lengthened wars with France and Scotland; and strengthened by the knowledge of a fellow-feeling on many parts of the continent.

The law which sought to force them back into the service of their former lords, was the law which crushed them with taxes, and limited the number of the markets in which they could sell the fruits of their toil: they learned to execrate it, before they could give expression to their fury.

lowers seem to have been most numerous, had unusual facilities for ascertaining his real teaching. Murimuth's continuator (and in this he is followed by Walsingham) tells us that Wickliffe taught that the Eucharist is not the true body of Christ, but only a figure (p. 222); but in Wickliffe's Profession of Faith (in Knighton, p. 2650) we read:—"And right as it is heresy to trow that sacrament is Christ's body and no bread, for it is both together." With this agrees not only the monk of Evesham's account, but Wickliffe's own reasoning and distinct statement in his Dialogues (lib. iv. c. 2 and 3). "Christ and his mother, that on ground [earth] had destroyed all heresies, keep his Church in right belief of this sacrament," are Wickliffe's own words in the Profession of Faith above quoted.

* Steph. Birch, *Vitæ Arch. Cant.* ap. Whart. vol. i. p. 42; and Will. de Dene, *Hist. Ecc. Roff.* ap. Whart. i. p. 375.

Suddenly their conscience was reconciled to their inclinations, by the flattering sophisms of the new itinerant preachers, or "poor priests." All men, they were told, were born equal :

" When Adam delved and Evè span,
Who was then the gentleman ? "

True is it, that had not Adam fallen, and did men hold their passions in subjection to reason, all things might still have remained in common. Unhappily, it is equally true, in order that lust of power or gain might not trample down the weak, and throw all things into confusion, that an acknowledged controlling power, both in the family and in society, is essential. What might have been, in a happier state of things, is now become impossible. The great everlasting day of regeneration must dawn, before man's possessions can again be in common.

This was concealed from the deluded serfs. They were told that property, titles, all things, ought to be in common, and that all distinction of ranks ought, therefore, to be abolished. They were never reminded of the impossibility of reducing this theory to practice; but were inflamed by violent declamations against the whole body of the rich, and more or less against even the clergy. Thus instigated, they no longer hesitated. They seized the first occasion: a chance insult offered by a brutal tax-collector; an attempt to compel payment of an obnoxious tax; and, at once, all the country from the Humber to the Thames, from Winchester and London to Beverley and Scarborough, was in open revolt.

Conflagration and murder marked the progress of the insurrection. London was soon in the hands of the insurgents; and woe to the justice, lawyer, Fleming or Lombard merchant, that fell into their hands; or to any one, indeed, that knew not their pass-word. The object of the rebels, according to the confession of Jack Straw, one of the itinerant preachers, was to destroy all the privileged classes, and even the young

king himself, as soon as they could make no further use of his authority, and to appoint kings of the commons over each county.

Full, it would seem, of this determination, they flocked to Tower-hill, and demanded the heads of the king's chancellor and treasurer. The Tower gates opened, and Richard himself and a few unarmed attendants issued forth. Sixty thousand of the rebels followed him to Mile-end, to make known and obtain their demands. Wat the Tyler, however, took advantage of the opened gates; and entering with four hundred men, seized and put to death, amongst other persons of distinction, the archbishop of Canterbury. His success, however, and his very life, were now drawing to a sudden termination.

Whilst holding a parley with the young king, he fell beneath the sword of the lord mayor; and the revolt was speedily extinguished.*

The year that followed the insurrection, is remarkable for the efforts of Wickliffe and his friends, as well as for the successful energy with which those efforts were discomfited.

The new archbishop, William Courtney, whom the Pope had translated from London to Canterbury, was determined to sift thoroughly the real teaching of the new sect. For this purpose, he called together a large number of doctors of theology, and professors of canon and civil law, and laid before them various propositions which had, again and again, been publicly taught by the unlicensed itinerant preachers. The patronage still afforded by Lancaster, was no longer of any avail. After a full discussion, the propositions were all condemned, some as erroneous and dangerous, and the rest as not merely erroneous, but erroneous in faith, heretical.

Courtney, immediately wrote to his suffragans, to direct their zeal against the false preachers, who were holding forth both in the streets and churches. Such

* Knighton; Evesham's Rich. II.; Stowe; Rolls of Parl. Rich. II. an. 1381, vol. iii. p. 106.

men were now marked out by the parliament: the sheriffs were ordered, at the intimation of any bishop before the Court of Chancery, to arrest the itinerant preachers and their abettors, and to imprison them until they were willing to plead in the ecclesiastical courts.*

When Courtney had written to his suffragans, he wrote to Rigg, the chancellor of Oxford, to the same effect, and enjoined him not to allow Wickliffe, or Nicholas Hereford or Philip Reppingdon, professors of sacred Scripture (Philip being besides a canon regular of Leicester Abbey), or John Ashton, a bachelor of theology, or other suspected men, to preach or to discharge any scholastic function, until they had removed all suspicion (June 12, 1382).†

A few days after, Hereford, Reppingdon, and Ashton were summoned to the archbishop's presence. They found him surrounded by a body of the most learned theologians and professors, both of the canon and civil law. Ashton refused to answer, and was, therefore, as one who had justly incurred suspicion of heresy, forbidden to preach either publicly or privately. Hereford and Reppingdon had requested and obtained a day's respite, in order to prepare an answer in writing. The answer, however, proved ambiguous. Something more precise was demanded. They were, for instance, pressed to state, whether in the Holy Eucharist there was that same body of Christ which was assumed of the Blessed Virgin.

If they could have been sincere in their preaching, now was the time for a manly avowal. Nothing of the sort, however: they were mute; would give no further answer.

The archbishop, seeing this, requested the opinions of the learned men around him. One by one, they spoke; and all unanimously pronounced four of the points under discussion to be insufficient, heretical,

* Wals. p. 283, &c.; Wilk. Conc. iii. p. 158.

† Wilk. Conc. iii. p. 160.

and crafty; and all to be erroneous and perverse. Ashton was declared to have fallen into error; and the other two were cautioned, under pain of excommunication, to reply on a fixed day, fully and plainly. The day soon arrived, but the accused were not to be found. They were pronounced contumacious (July, 1382). Immediately after, the clergy and people of all ranks went barefooted in a general procession through London. Having at last reached St. Paul's Cross, and wax-lights being set up with all the usual forms, sentence of excommunication against the two Wickliffites was published. The lighted tapers were then flung upon the ground, in allusion, doubtless, to the admonition in Holy Writ: "Be mindful then from whence thou art fallen; and do penance and do the first works. Or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place unless thou do penance."

The voice of the Church being supported by the royal mandate, this double pressure produced an immediate effect. Ashton and Reppington made a complete submission (Oct. and Nov. 1382). They were absolved; and were even re-admitted to their places in the university. Hereford does not appear to have been again restored to the university. He had appealed to the Holy See, but incurred a confirmation of the archbishop's sentence. He seems to have finished his days, voluntarily or not, as a Carthusian, in the monastery of St. Ann's in Coventry.*

William de Berton, the chancellor of Oxford, had, meantime, issued a zealous mandate against all Wickliffite preachers. It was published in a general assembly of the university in the hall of the Augustinians. Wickliffe himself was present; and his confusion was manifest.

* Rymer, an. 1382 (3rd ed.) tom. iii. pars 3, p. 141; Knight. pp. 2644—2651, and 2657, 2708; Wilk. iii. pp. 158—169. From a mandate of Henry of Worcester, it would appear that Ashton relapsed in the course of the next five years.—Wilk. iii. p. 202, A.D. 1387.

He had appealed, before the condemnation of his supporters, not to Rome, but to the secular power. He knew that the government was impoverished by its interminable and now disastrous wars with France and Scotland; he knew, moreover, that what had been alleged by the Commons, as their motive for recently withholding a grant, was their fear of a second insurrection, and he couched his petition in terms suited to the circumstances, if not to the wishes, of the members. He prayed that the error of those that condemned the teaching of Christ and his Apostles (meaning his own) should be amended; and that the incomes of such clergy "as were fallen from God's grace,"* and all superfluous property of the Church, being the patrimony of the poor, should be employed in place of taxes; that is, in reality, should be employed to save the purses of the rich: of tax-payers, who were generally of the richer classes, and of the members of parliament, to whom the petition was addressed, quite as much as the poor. Such was the sincerity of the petitioners.

The petition, crafty as it was, was discarded. As Lancaster seems to have been personally appealed to, he presented himself at the general assembly of the Oxford University. He supported, however, not Wickliffe, but the chancellor. Wickliffe, as if thrown off his guard, declared that none before him had been right, save only Berengarius. The result of all was, that he was again branded, and still more solemnly than before, by the university: twelve of its most learned men examined his writings, explicitly condemned them, and presented a copy of the sentence to a synod then sitting at St. Paul's.

A procession of all the clergy and people, going barefooted through the city, and pausing at St. Paul's Cross to hear a Carthusian friar announce what had

* Lewis professes to have produced all the propositions, as stated by Walsingham; and yet he has omitted that which regards the endowments of the clergy.—Comp. L. p. 99; and Wals. 283.

taken place, gave additional publicity to the condemnation of the Wickliffites * (A.D. 1383).

Being disappointed in his appeal to the secular power, Wickliffe had, at length, and apparently before this procession, signified his readiness to submit: in presence of the archbishop of Canterbury, and of seven other prelates, he read an orthodox confession of faith, and was allowed to withdraw to his rectory at Lutterworth. Either just before, or immediately after this, he was struck with paralysis, and two years afterwards, whilst assisting at the mass of his curate, his tongue and most of his limbs were struck, at the moment of the elevation, with another fit of paralysis. After an agony of forty-eight hours, his soul passed to its account (Dec. 31, 1384). If we are to believe Walsingham, he died, according to the statements of eye-witnesses, with every "outward symptom" of despair.

His heresy, unhappily, survived him. Having been undisturbed in its earlier growth, it could no longer be thoroughly uprooted. In Leicestershire, where its promoters were, no doubt, his own personal acquaintances, Sir Thomas Latimer, Sir John Trussel, Sir Lewis Clifford, and a few others, had influence enough to draw large assemblies to listen to the Lollard preachers. They themselves stood in their armour around the pulpit, and, according to Knighton, brandished their swords to terrify those that remained unconvinced.† Their favourite apostle was William

* Ap. Wilk. iii. pp. 170 and 171; and Evesh. and Knight. an. 1382.

† Rolls, vol. iii. p. 141; Wals. p. 312; Lewis, Rec. No. 25; Knight. 2666. It must, however, be observed, that Knighton is not only credulous but superficial. The duke of Lancaster, who had a castle and extensive lands near Leicester, is his prominent character, standing out from the rest in colossal proportions. When, however, the duke is acting at a distance (as in his frequent perils from supposed designs against his nephew, the king,—see Evesh. p. 60, and *anté*), Knighton is perfectly silent. In Knighton's pages the Wickliffites alone share in the importance of their former patron, the duke of Lancaster. On other subjects his brevity, and oftentimes his silence, are very striking.

Smith, a mechanic, who being, we are told, crossed in love, denounced marriage as unlawful, left off the use of shoes and stockings, and of flesh and fish, wine and beer; and at last learned "his alphabet," and became a Lollard preacher. Whatever might be thought of such men, they became formidable from the influence of their patrons.

An Augustinian friar, a chaplain in the army which Lancaster had conveyed to Spain, had abandoned his order and become a Lollard. Supported by a party of one hundred men of the new sect, he entered the church of St. Christopher in London, mounted the pulpit, and poured out an invective against the whole body of the Augustinians, charging them, at once, with sodomy, murder, and treason (A.D. 1387).

The Augustinian convent being close at hand, twelve of the friars, so far from shrinking before the accusation, entered the church in time to hear the latter part of the harangue. When it was finished, one of the friars arose to rebut the charge. Instead of listening to his defence, the hundred Wickliffites seized him, hurled him down, tore his habit, beat him violently, and trampled him under foot. The others would have shared his treatment, had they not fled precipitately from their unexpected assailants. Returning excited from this valorous pursuit, the Lollards were on the point of firing the church, when the intervention of one of the sheriffs put an end to the commotion. Strange to say, no punishment seems to have been inflicted, although a common riot would not have escaped the strong hand of the law. Consistently with their refusal to listen to the defence, the Lollards set up a list of the charges on the great gates of St. Paul's, and attached to it the names of the friars whom they denounced, and of the place where, as they pretended, the bodies of the murdered men were to be found.* As the apostate friar was attached to Lancaster's army, it is not improbable that his abettors

* Knight. 2706; and Evesh. 82.

also were; and the Lancastrian badge, which the duke's followers wore, was perhaps the cause of the sheriff's pusillanimity.

Seeing the audacity of the Lollards, both Lords and Commons united in a petition to the king for legal redress, "lest the ark of the Church, left without a rudder, should suffer loss, and the glorious kingdom of England should, by an adulteration of her faith, fall by degrees into a desolation of grace and honour." The king, therefore, by advice of the whole parliament, both enjoined the bishops to punish the delinquents with the utmost rigour of the canon law, and by letters patent instituted a search in every county for Lollards and Lollard books (May, 1387). Little, however, was really done: the dissensions between the king and his uncles impeded the whole machinery of government.

For some years after this, it becomes more difficult than ever to trace the actions of the Wickliffites. Their teachings, as appears from Knighton's testimony, had been modified by the addition of new tenets. They now said that it was unlawful to take an oath; denied the intercession of the saints; declared that the Holy Eucharist is but a sign, and not the substance of the body of our Lord; pronounced accursed all the superior clergy; and, forgetting the distinction between the commands and the counsels of Christ, asserted that no one could enter heaven unless he reduced himself to poverty by giving all that he possessed to the poor. The Wickliffite priests pretended to ordain other priests; and the newly ordained pretended to say mass and administer the sacraments.*

Seeing that all the measures against the Lollards had hitherto proved ineffectual, and seeing that the diocese of Norwich was the only one which the vigour of the bishop and clergy had preserved perfectly untainted, the archbishop of Canterbury thought it his duty to make a personal visitation of his province.

* Knight. 2669, 2706, and 2708; Evesh. 113 and 114; Wilk. Conc. iii. pp. 221, 248, 339, &c.

As he passed through Oxford, Leicester, and some other places, he made the convicted Wickliffites do penance in their shirts. The effect was instantaneous. They persisted, indeed, in secret; but no more preaching without due permission, no more discord and tumult.

A few years later, whilst Richard II. was absent in Ireland, the Wickliffites suddenly reappeared (A.D. 1394); they set up in public places libels against the clergy, as gross as they were vague; presented to the Commons an address, or rather a kind of defence of some of their principal errors, and adding that, contrary to Christ's law of mercy and love, both war and the execution of criminals were tolerated, as well as the pernicious trades of goldsmiths and sword-cutlers, and various unnecessary arts, they concluded with petitioning for reform.*

As God appointed the sacraments not for those only that administer, but for those also that receive them, it is only a proof of combined wisdom and love, that He should give the same grace whether the minister of the sacrament be a just man or a sinner. War and executions are always to be deplored. If adopted as the only means of obtaining order in society, they are a sharp but necessary medicine. The employment of bishops or priests in secular business has, except in very peculiar cases, always been, as these pages have again and again shown, resisted by the most zealous popes and bishops.

Reflections such as these, however, do not appear to have troubled the new sectarians.

Checked for a moment by a sharp rebuke from the throne (A.D. 1395), they again, gradually, recovered their spirits, and at last assailed the Church as virulently as ever.† In a large class of men there are sure

* Wilk. iii. p. 221; Knight. 2736. The chronicler assigns 1392 as the date; but from his own context it would almost seem that this is a mistake for 1390; and yet, after all, it is, as quoted by Wilkins from the Cotton MSS., 1394 (Wilk. iii. p. 221).

† Wals. 1394, 1395, p. 351.

to be some whose vices are notorious. To depict and exaggerate such vices, and to ascribe them not to the individual, but to the entire class, is a task easy in itself, and but too greedily learned by the discontented, the envious, and the malicious. The Wickliffites, therefore, found an audience; nor was that audience diminished when it was told that enormous taxes, and all the evils of the nation, sprang from the wealth of the Church.

All these inflammatory declarations might, perhaps, have been contemned, had they not a practical tendency: the people were told and urged not to pay tithes, and a resolution to confiscate the property of the Church was openly avowed. The duke of Lancaster, their first patron, had long since been undeceived, and had driven them from his presence. Richard II., too, on coming of age, had supported the efforts of the bishops; but it was reserved for the house of Lancaster to reduce them to complete silence. Henry IV. declared himself, from his very accession, the champion of the Church's teaching and liberties. The Commons thanked him, and introduced a stringent law, nothing less than death by fire. This statute ("De Comburendo Heretico," as it is called) declared that the Lollards taught new doctrines; misled the people by their falsehoods, and excited them to insurrection; committed "enormities too fearful to be mentioned;" and when cited by the bishop of one diocese, found impunity by retiring into another. All Lollards were, therefore, forbidden, under pain of fine and imprisonment, to keep schools, to have or publish heretical books, or to hold conventicles. All the bishops were, moreover, empowered to detain persons who were strongly suspected, until they had either cleared themselves according to canon law, or, being convicted, had suffered imprisonment, and paid a fine into the royal treasury. If a person thus convicted refused to abjure the new doctrines, or relapsed after abjuration, then the sheriff of the county, or chief magistrate of the nearest borough, should attend the ecclesiastical

court to hear such a person declared an obstinate heretic; and, at once, should receive him into custody, and cause him to be burned on a high public place, as an example to others.*

The first victim of this severe enactment was William Sawtre. This man had been rector of Lynn, but being convicted before the bishop of Norwich of Lollardism, forfeited his living. After having recanted his errors, he obtained a chaplaincy at St. Sythe's, in London; but relapsing, and petitioning to dispute upon religious subjects, was tried in a provincial synod of Westminster. His petition savours of fanatical madness; but still more his barefaced denial. He had the effrontery to deny before the bishops and clergy, that he had ever recanted, or been found guilty of heresy. The trial was repeatedly postponed, from an evident wish that the man might not fall into the jaws of the new statute. Delay increased his insolence, without affording any ground for eluding judgment. On the eleventh day, the registry of his previous recantation having already been produced, he was pronounced a relapsed heretic, and degraded from the ranks and privileges of the clergy (A.D. 1401). The officers of justice immediately seized him, and the wretched man was consigned to the flames.

Such a punishment is seldom successful. The Lollards continued, as loudly as ever, to assail the temporalities of the Church. The barons, at last, began to fear for their own possessions (A.D. 1407). In concurrence with the House of Commons, and with the prince of Wales at their head, they addressed the throne, stating that the clergy were as truly endowed with their possessions as they themselves were with their inheritances. The former could not be menaced without danger to the latter. An attempt would cer-

* Knighton (p. 2667) tells us that, as early as 1382, one of the Wickliffite preachers was condemned by the bishop of Lincoln to the flames; but at the prayer of the duke of Lancaster, and on condition of publicly recanting in the various churches of Leicester, was pardoned. Is this only another proof of Knighton's credulity?

tainly be made to render all property common, to the great disturbance of the people and the destruction of the kingdom. Only four years later, when they were repeatedly pressed by the king for subsidies, some of the Commons assumed a tone the very contrary. There were superfluous revenues in the Church, they said. From such resources he could maintain fifteen earls, one thousand five hundred knights, and six thousand two hundred esquires, besides enough for one hundred hospitals devoted to the maintenance of the poor. The king asked them to point out these superfluous revenues. For this question they were not prepared, and therefore received a strong rebuke, and an injunction to speak no more upon such topics.*

Henry IV. had scarcely died, when a declaration was found upon the doors of all the principal churches in London, announcing, that if the new king attempted to oppose their doctrines, they could assemble a hundred thousand armed men to withstand his attempts.

An investigation into the authors of this menace, proved that Sir John Oldecastle, commonly known, from his wife's inheritance, as the lord of Cobham, was the chief instigator and supporter of the Lollard agitation. His castle of Cowling, in Kent, was the refuge of the new preachers. His vassals were their armed defenders. This man, the gray-haired companion of the young Henry's profligate hours when as yet only prince of Wales, had been dismissed by him on his accession. As this separation had not been dictated by resentment, the young king, overlooking the late menace, renewed his acquaintance, in some degree, with the knight in his royal castle of Windsor, and endeavoured to dissuade him from what must necessarily end in disgrace (A.D. 1413). In the course of conversation, Henry produced a manuscript which Sir John had sent to be illuminated, and told him that

* Wilk. Conc. iii. pp. 170, 254, &c.; Rot. Parl. iii. p. 459 (No. 29), and 466 (No. 48), and 583 (No. 62); stat. 2 Hen. IV. c. 15; Wals. A.D. 1402, 1404, and 1410, pp. 366, 371, and 379.

the doctrines contained in it were in the highest degree pernicious. The knight's reply was, that he had never read more than a couple of pages. In short, the result of several conferences was unsatisfactory. The king began to threaten; and the lord of Cobham thought it time to hurry away to Cowling Castle.

Henry immediately issued a proclamation, commanding the arrest not only of the Lollard preachers, but of their supporters and hearers. He despatched, at the same time, a mandate to the archbishop of Canterbury, enjoining him to deal with Oldcastle according to law. This was no easy matter: girt in with battlements, and surrounded with armed retainers, who had doubtlessly been well leavened with the errors of their master, he could afford to jeer at the archbishop's summons, and, in apparent security, bide his time.

Neither his jeers nor his security, however, were of long duration: the royal banner and the king's men now appeared, in place of the archbishop's messengers, and compelled him to open his gates, and issue forth, to take up his abode in one of the Tower dungeons. When put on his trial in the spiritual courts, he poured out bitter invectives upon the Church, and told the people present to beware of the men that were sitting there as his judges. He was finally pronounced an obstinate heretic. The officers of civil justice immediately seized him, but the archbishop procured him a respite of fifty days.

During this interval, Oldcastle escaped from the Tower, and despatching messengers in various directions, began to assemble a military force. To seize Henry in his palace at Eltham, was the first object. Baffled by the king's departure to Westminster, he commanded his followers to assemble in St. Giles's Fields. Henry was as energetic as the hoary rebel: the first bands of the Lollards that reached the fields, found themselves in presence of the royal forces, and were at once secured (Jan. 7th, 1414). The tidings quickly spread; and great numbers, who were throng-

ing to the appointed spot, disbanded and fled. Many of the prisoners were executed, but Oldcastle escaped.

In an address presented by the Commons, as well as in a royal proclamation, we are told that the object of the rising was to destroy the Christian faith, and the king and his relatives, as well as the bishops; to secularize the religious orders; to seize the property of the Church; to abolish the spiritual and temporal estates, and all the laws; and "to appoint Sir John Oldcastle president of the new commonwealth." If so, the similarity of object between this insurrection and that of Wat the Tyler is remarkable, and would seem to establish the fact that they had a common origin. The stringency of the laws against Lollardism was now redoubled: all judges and magistrates whatever were empowered to arrest suspected individuals; and convicted prisoners were subjected to forfeiture of lands and goods.

Two years passed, and suddenly Sir John Oldcastle again made his appearance. The French and Scottish wars were still fiercely burning, and Henry, now the victor of Agincourt, was absent in France, when, by a preconcerted arrangement, Douglas and Albany led the Scots across the borders, and Oldcastle unfurled his standard in the neighbourhood of London. The attempt, bold as it was, was instantaneously crushed: a numerous English army scared away the Scottish marauders; and Oldcastle, finding but a scanty band to trust to, fled from St. Alban's to the marches of Wales. There he was compelled to stand at bay, and, despite of his dogged valour, to yield himself a prisoner. On his trial, instead of a defence, he preached a sermon on forgiveness. He was executed at Tyburn. He had told his adherents (so it is asserted) that he would rise again on the third day. It is needless to add that they were disappointed (Dec. 1416).

Several years before Oldcastle's death, the Lollards again, for a brief period, made their appearance at Oxford. A panegyric upon Wickliffe, who was declared

to be no heretic, was dated from the "House of our Congregation," at Oxford (Oct. 1406). The surprise which at first it might have caused, soon doubtless yielded to indignation or contempt: it proved to be the forgery of some obscure individuals. For in 1411, amongst various complaints laid before the archbishop in synod, one was, that students of Oxford, once so obedient, have grown disobedient, and have even made use of the seal of the university, without the knowledge of "the masters and doctors, to send abroad false letters in favour of heretics." In the following year, 1412, the university again marked its sense of Wickliffe's teaching, by laying before the archbishop its condemnation of two hundred and sixty-seven propositions extracted from that heresiarch's writings.*

* Rolls, vol. N, p. 24 (No. 24, 2 H. V.), and p. 108 (No. 11, 5 H. V.), and var. Proclam. in Rymer during the year 1414; Wilk. c. iii. pp. 302, 336, 339, 353, &c.; Wals. pp. 382 and 399; Tit. Livius and Elmh. H. V.; and Otterb. 267, &c.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE GREAT SCHISM—ST. CATHERINE OF SIENNA—APOSTOLIC LABOURS OF ST. VINCENT FERRER—COUNCILS OF PISA AND CONSTANCE—PRÆMUNIRE STATUTES AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES—EFFORTS OF MARTIN V. FOR THEIR REPEAL—REPROVES CHICHELEY, THE TOO COURTLY ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY—ZEAL OF EUGENIUS IV.

IN order to give an uninterrupted view of the nature and immediate results of Wickliffe' serrors, two great classes of events—the Great Schism and some Præmunire Statutes—have hitherto been omitted. They will now be narrated; but necessarily in such a manner as to lead back in each case into the reigns of Henry IV. and Richard II.

At the close of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries, the Church was subjected to a new and most severe trial. For nearly seventy years the popes had resided not at Rome, but in their own city of Avignon, in the south of France. Gregory XI., overcome by the entreaties of the Roman people, and reminded by St. Catherine of Sienna to fulfil a secret vow which he made of going to Rome, returned to the tombs of the Apostles. After his death, the Romans feared, that if another Frenchman were chosen pope, they would again be deserted (A.D. 1378). They therefore surrounded the place in which the cardinals were deliberating, and demanded that a Roman should be made pope. The electors, however, chose the archbishop of Bari, a Neapolitan. He took the name of Urban VI.

His expressions, being sometimes exceedingly harsh, so displeased some of the cardinals that they withdrew from his court some months after his being enthroned; and declaring that the election had not been free,

chose as pope one of their own body who had lately voted for Urban, and who now took the name of Clement VII., and fixed his residence at Avignon (A.D. 1378).

England, guided by the archbishop of Canterbury and all his suffragans, adhered, along with Poland, Germany, Hungary, and the greater part of Italy, to Urban; and after his death to his successors, Boniface IX., Innocent VII., and Gregory XII. France, amongst other countries, supported Clement, and for a few months his successor, Peter de Luna, or Benedict XIII. All acknowledged, as firmly as before, the rights of St. Peter's successor; but the question raised, although perhaps on insufficient grounds, was, which of the two claimants was the real successor.

While the Church was offering public supplications that this Great Schism, as it was too justly called, might be speedily terminated, several princes, and even some ecclesiastics, by endeavouring to make it subservient to their ambition, added to the confusion.*

Others there were mingling in this afflicting scene only to speak of peace, and to labour for it even at the risk of life. These were persons wondrous (if we may credit unexceptionable testimony) for their gifts of prophecy and miracles, persons raised up by the mercy of God as a spectacle to all, and an especial encouragement to the good. One of the most eminent of these was the much afflicted, most heroic St. Catherine of Sienna, who induced Gregory to return to Rome, and who afterwards exerted herself not only to encourage Urban, but to recall France and other nations to their obedience. Scarcely had St. Catherine passed to her crown, when St. Vincent Ferrer began to attract the eyes of Europe. He was preaching with unusual fruit in Valentia, when Peter de Luna, then legate in Spain for Clement VII., prevailed upon him, with the utmost difficulty, to accompany him

* Raynaldi, tom. xxvi. passim; and Mansi's note to p. 299; Wilk. Conc. iii.; Labbe's Hist. Conc. Const.

during his embassy; but he could never induce him to go to Clement's residence at Avignon. When Clement was dead, and he himself had succeeded him as Benedict XIII., he called St. Vincent to Avignon, and made him his confessor and master of the palace. After repeated exertions to arouse and guide the zeal of Sigismund of Germany, in order to procure the meeting of a general council, and after various ineffectual efforts to induce Benedict to terminate the schism, St. Vincent obtained leave to withdraw, refusing the offer of several bishoprics and a cardinal's hat.*

His all-absorbing thought now was to preach. The confusion caused partly by the schism, and still more by wars and insurrections, had produced gross ignorance and neglect of the sacraments, and had let loose a flood of profligacy which was extending on every side. To instruct the ignorant, and to arouse all to repentance, was St. Vincent's absorbing desire. Perceiving this, and unable any longer to retain him, Benedict made him, therefore, apostolic missionary.

Accompanied by five other Dominicans, St. Vincent began this apostolic journey (A.D. 1398). Going on foot from place to place, and continually preaching and hearing confessions, he yet rigidly observed the rule of his order, never tasting flesh meat, unless from evident necessity.

His sermons were chiefly on sin and the judgments of God, and particularly on the Last Day. Wonderful was their effect, innumerable the conversions of the most hardened and notorious. Thus, through almost every part of Europe, the saint passed, not only preaching, but working numerous and public miracles. At the invitation of Henry IV., he came to England. Nor did he forget Scotland and Ireland (A.D. 1406 and 1407). A few years afterwards he was invited by Henry V. to preach in Normandy, when it had fallen beneath the victors of Harfleur and Agincourt. The

* See their lives in the Boll. April, tom. iii. p. 936, &c.; and tom. i. p. 491, &c.

king and his court were amazed at the power and elegance of his discourses. He was accustomed to preach for hours together, and yet the people seemed never weary. Crowds even followed him from one place to another.

The efforts of such devoted souls, and the prayers of the Church, were now, despite of evil passions, producing their effect. The cardinals on both sides suggested the propriety of a resignation; and a vehement desire for peace and unity was everywhere manifesting itself (A.D. 1407). In England, the bishops consulted; despatched the bishop of Winchester and the abbot of Shrewsbury to beseech the Pope not to desist from his efforts for unity; and, at length, receiving an invitation from the body of the cardinals, despatched representatives to the Council of Pisa* (A.D. 1409). Both Gregory and Benedict, it was found, were unwilling to appear.

Without an acknowledged head, how could the synod, at least humanly speaking, succeed? If, as there was the strongest reason to suppose, Urban VI. had been, after all, freely elected, the acts of the synod were null, unless sanctioned by his lawful successor, Gregory XII. Yet both Gregory and Benedict XIII. protested against the synod. The synod, on the other hand, declared them deposed, and elected Alexander V.; and thus its efforts, instead of promoting peace, increased the confusion: there were now three claimants instead of two. Whether, under the circumstances, the synod was legitimate, appears to be still a question.

The synod had decreed that it should meet again in three years. Some of the bishops, therefore, went at the appointed time to Pisa. Alexander, however, was now dead, and John XXIII. was holding his place, and was only as yet considering in what place to assemble the council.

Grieving, however, for the growth of heresy in

* Ib. Wilk. iii. pp. 306, 310, 313; Thos. Otterb. p. 280; Labbe's Conc. A.D. 1409; and Hist. Conc. Constan.

England and Bohemia, and urged by the zealous emperor Sigismund, John summoned a council, at last, to Constance (A.D. 1414). The prelates of the Church assembled there in great numbers. They declared John XXIII. deposed; and to this sentence, after some delay, he himself assented (May 29, 1415). Gregory, the successor of Urban VI., then, for the sake of peace, resigned his claims, after having sanctioned the assembling of the council. Benedict had been for some time forsaken by all except Ferdinand of Arragon, and a few immediately around him in the sea-washed fortress of Pensicola, in the kingdom of Arragon. His refusal, despite of the personal application of Sigismund and of the legates of the council, and his flight to Pensicola by night, were, therefore, alike unheeded. The council proceeded to another election (A.D. 1417); and when it had chosen Martin V., all the Church Catholic acquiesced; and the Great Schism was thus, at last, completely closed * (April 22, 1418). More than four years had been consumed in these efforts for union. It was decreed, therefore, that the bishops should at once return to their respective flocks; and that the important task of the reformation of morals should be undertaken in a subsequent council.

This important work, however, was not in the mean time overlooked: the new Pope addressed himself to it with unremitting assiduity. In the midst of these labours, England was not forgotten. Yet how was the shepherd to feed or heal the sheep in that part of the vast fold, when they were studiously barred off from his approach? This obstruction was created by the laws of unrighteous kings, and especially of Edward III. Richard II., untaught by adversity, endeavoured, no less than his grandfather, to secure the imaginary "rights of the Crown," by daring to impede what he and every Catholic held to be the Pope's especial and indispensable duty, the feeding of

* Labbe, tom. xii.; Thos. Otterb. 265; Thos. de Elmh. p. 90.

the flock of Christ: "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs." It will be useful, then, before noticing the efforts of Martin, to glance at the remaining præmunire statutes of Richard and Henry.

In 1388, it was enacted, that if a provisor had gone or sent beyond sea, to procure a benefice, with or without the care of souls, he was to be outlawed, and to forfeit the benefice.

In the beginning of 1390, the interference of the state in these ecclesiastical matters was pushed to the very utmost limits. The twenty-fifth of Edward III. against provisors, was recited at length, and confirmed. If any one, it was added, received a benefice contrary to the statute, he was to suffer forfeiture and banishment. If any one, cleric or layman, sued at Rome, on any point touched by the statute, he was to be fined. If any one were to bring or send within the realm "summonses, sentences, or excommunication," for something done regarding the said statute of provisors, he was to suffer forfeiture and death. It was also enacted, in the beginning of Henry IV., and, on one point, in what referred solely to jurisdiction, that if any person accepted a provision from the Pope exempting him from "obedience regular or obedience ordinary," or exempting him, as one had lately exempted the Cistercians, from the payment of tithes, such a person was to incur the penalties just mentioned of the thirteenth of Richard II.

Although much suffering was inflicted by these laws, it was impossible to put them in full execution amongst a Catholic people. From the last of these statutes (in the ninth year of Henry IV.), it becomes evident that they had proved but little better than empty threats. For, whilst the statutes of Edward III. and Richard II. were confirmed, it was announced that the king's pardon was given to all who had become liable to punishment under those statutes; and that they could, therefore, act and execute, by their notaries, executors, and other agents, in the full

freedom of this pardon. They were told, however, to take care for the future * (A.D. 1407).

How these statutes were regarded by the clergy, or by the nation at large, there are few means of ascertaining. The few, however, that remain speak of them with disapprobation, or even with undisguised execration.

When the statute of 1390 was just passed, the archbishops and bishops, in the presence not only of the Lords, but of a large assemblage of the Commons, protested, in the name of the whole body of the clergy, that they did not intend to assent to any statute, whether newly made or only re-enacted, "inasmuch as statutes of this kind are known to tend to the restraining of the Apostolical authority," or to the weakening or subversion of ecclesiastical liberty; but, on the contrary, to dissent from them, and to make reclamation against them, "as we have always done" in times past (Jan. 1390).

A few years after this protest, the two universities complained to the convocation of the effect of the statutes of provisors and præmunire (A.D. 1399). When the Pope had granted provisions, they attested, he always took care to bestow them upon men who had taken their degrees in the universities. A salutary stimulant was thus given to the studies. When, however, the Pope was hindered by the new statutes, the stimulant was removed; and as the patrons when presenting paid little attention to university qualifications, the studies languished, and the students fell off both in numbers and application.

A few years passed, and the House of Commons itself, struck by the condition of the universities, petitioned the Throne for the repeal of all the Acts of provisors (A.D. 1416). The king, however, said that he had already referred the question to the bishops. This was, indeed, an opportunity for the latter. A little

* Stat. of the Realm, 12 Ric. II. c. 15; 13 Ric. II. stat. 2, c. 2 and 3 (another, somewhat similar, passed in 16 Ric. II.); 2 Hen. IV. c. 3 and 4; and 9 Hen. IV. c. 8 and 9.

zeal for the Chair of St. Peter and the liberties of the Church, and this root of schism might be completely removed. Unfortunately Chicheley, the archbishop of Canterbury, appears to have been lukewarm in the matter, and thus the opportunity passed, never to return.*

During the reign of Henry IV., who had dethroned Richard II., there was an almost constant series of insurrections. Previously to one of these appeals to arms, a list of accusations against Henry was set up on the gates of York Minster. These being an appeal to arouse to a combined effort against Henry IV., must have embodied not merely the sentiments of the writers, but of many of those to whom they were addressed (A.D. 1405). It will, therefore, be interesting to see what view of the laws of provisors is taken in this document. The view there taken will be evident from the following extract:—

“We lay down in the eighth place, that the same Lord Henry, after he had *de facto*, and not *de jure* (as we have already shown), obtained and inherited the kingdom, and the royal crown of the same kingdom, knowingly approves, ratifies, and supports a certain most wicked statute, promulgated and renewed in a parliament at Winchester (under Richard II.). The statute, indeed, is directly against the Roman Curia, and its power and principality, delivered and conferred by our Lord Jesus Christ to Blessed Peter and his successors, the Roman pontiffs; to whom, from the plenitude of their power, the full and free disposition, appointment, and collation of all ecclesiastical benefices, both superior and inferior, ought, as it is well known, to belong.”

* See the protest in the Rolls, tom. iii. p. 264 (No. 24); or in Wilk. iii. 242. See also Harpsf. (from Chicheley's Registers), p. 650, A.D. 1417 and 1438. Before many years passed, the clergy found themselves annoyed in many ways, quite unforeseen, by the operation of these statutes, notwithstanding the Pope's remonstrances. It was not until 1462 that they began to be relieved from this oppression; and then only by the temporary expedient of a royal charter.—Harpsf. p. 622; and ap. Collier, p. 679, A.D. 1462.

The document then points out some consequences of the statute. Many confer the benefices upon young persons, who are both illiterate and unworthy; often too upon "their own illegitimate sons and relations," involved with themselves in enormous sins, and table-companions. Few confer them without a compact to receive "a third or half the benefice" thus conferred: so that knights, squires, merchants, will rather, it continues, bring up their sons in some worldly calling than send them to a university to be enrolled among the clergy.

"And thus that most wicked statute is not only derogatory to the right of St. Peter, and to the Roman and Anglican Church, but also destructive to the clergy, and to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge; and consequently to the knighthood and republic of the kingdom: because from one thing another always follows." *

If such were the feelings with which the universities, the House of Commons, and many of the people regarded these statutes, and if, when the question is examined by its application to acknowledged principles, the feeling is approved by reason, it is no

* Ap. Whart. ii. p. 366. It is worthy of observation, that in these articles the Blessed Virgin is termed "intemerata et benedicta;" and that St. George is called the "special protector and advocate of the kingdom of England" (p. 362). In a synod held by Chicheley, in the beginning of Henry IV.'s reign, St. George is spoken of in precisely the same manner; and his festival is ordered to be kept not only as a double (as was appointed in 1222), but as a double on which the "minor servile works" were forbidden.—(Harpsf. p. 620.) He was patron of the Order of the Garter. The synod in which St. George's festival was thus honoured, enjoined that those of St. David, St. Chad, and St. Winifrid should likewise be more solemnly kept. For Courtney's injunction regarding the feast of St. Anne, and England's devotion to her who was mother of the Blessed Virgin, see Wilk. iii. 178; Harpsf. (quoting the Canterbury archives) p. 620. To these brief notices it may be added, that Arundel, Chicheley's immediate predecessor, at the request of Henry IV., had enjoined all the faithful to repeat every day, at the sound of the bell, the "Our Father" and "Hail, Mary," in the morning, at mid-day, and in the evening. This was punctually observed until the days of Harpsfeld, who narrates it in the middle of the sixteenth century (p. 619).

wonder that the Holy See should have always denounced such an invasion of its own duties and prerogatives. Even during the schism, when the popes seemed under a necessity of courting royal favour, they raised their voice against it, as did Boniface IX., when he declared the statute of 1390, as well as those of Edward I. and Edward III., to be null and void, because they were notoriously “against ecclesiastical liberty, and the Roman Church” (Feb. 4, 1391). Now that the schism was over, Martin V. knew well that one of the great causes of evil was the impeding of the free action of the Church; and therefore, in his contest with the gigantic evils around him, his first object was to destroy this impediment. He therefore wrote to Henry V., urging in the strongest manner the repeal of the *præmunire* statutes, against some of which the bishops had vainly protested, and which hampered all communication with the Holy See. Henry V., in answer to Martin’s letters, promised that on his return to England (for he was then in France) he would submit the question to his parliament (A.D. 1421); but he had no opportunity of proving his sincerity: he died in the course of the following year. Martin, therefore, urged the council of regency to provide for the liberty of the Church* (A.D. 1422). Nothing being done, and, on the contrary, the bishoprics being conferred at pleasure by the council of regency, whilst the laws were cruelly enforced against those that attempted to convey into England the Pope’s letters, Martin wrote to the Cardinal Henry of Winchester, telling him, that if he had thought of the account which he would have to render for his flock at the day of judgment, he would long since have aroused himself to seek his wandering sheep, and to resist those that trample upon the rights and privileges of the “Head of all the churches,” the Holy See. He reminded him of the threats in Ezechiel

* See Martin’s letters in Raynal. 1421, No. 18; and 1422, No. 29; and Bull. Feb. 1391.

against the watchers who perceive the sword coming and sound not the trumpet. The sword of iniquity has fallen on your sheep. Read the royal statute—if that can be called a statute which destroys the statutes of God and his Church. The king of England disposes of the provisions and administration of churches as if Christ had appointed him his vicar. He draws ecclesiastical questions to lay tribunals, as if he held the keys of Peter. He has enacted penalties against clerics such as do not exist against Jews and pagans. For the mere fact of receiving benefices by authority of the Supreme Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ, exile, imprisonment, and spoliation await them. Those that introduce into England any censure or process from the Apostolic See are outlawed and put to death. When was such iniquity ever heard of? Christ said to Peter, “Feed my sheep;” the statute says that the king shall feed them. Is this a Catholic statute? Can it be obeyed or tolerated without an insult to Christ and a transgression of the Gospel? Why then do you not lift up your voice like a trumpet, announcing to your people their sins, in order that their blood may not be required at your hands? That we may not partake in your guilt, we exhort you, nay, we command you, under pain of excommunication, *ipso facto* incurred, to produce such arguments from reason, the Old and New Testament, the sanctions of the Fathers, the decrees of the Popes, and the custom of the universal Church, in the next parliament, as your abilities will enable you, in order that the aforesaid statute may be utterly annulled. We command you to make it known, at the same time, that all those that enforce such statutes against ecclesiastical liberty, are *ipso jure* excommunicated. Under the same penalties, we command you to enjoin all preachers, secular or regular, as well as the rectors of churches, to instruct the people frequently upon this subject. We require you also to acquaint us with what you will have done in consequence of this injunction, attesting your written account by the signatures of two

grave witnesses of your "requisitions"* (Dec. 9, 1426).

The Pope did not fail to write to the young Henry himself upon this important subject. Being told that the king could do nothing without the assent of parliament, he wrote immediately a similar letter to parliament. He had already written to Henry Chicheley, the archbishop of Canterbury, charging him with being the cause of the non-abrogation of the law; and as Chicheley had ceased to act as the representative of the Holy See, the Pope deprived him of the dignity of legate. This just punishment was keenly felt by Chicheley; and the more as Beaufort of Winchester and Kemp of York, being both cardinals, took precedence of the archbishop of Canterbury as soon as he ceased to be legate. Quite consistently with his previous conduct, Chicheley, at first, appealed to a general council, and to the Pope "better informed" (April 6, 1427); but he either made this appeal known only to his own secretaries, or immediately submitted. For Martin again wrote to him, enjoining him to prove himself guiltless, not by words, but by his utmost efforts for the repeal, and enjoining him the same course as had already been enjoined to the cardinal.†

When mentioning the non-abrogation of the law, the Pope seems to refer to the opportunity, in 1416, which Chicheley so tamely allowed to pass away. Indeed, what could be expected from a prelate who, after taking the canonical oath of obedience to the Holy See, took an oath to Henry renouncing everything contrary to the rights of the Crown, as if the oath did contain any clauses subversive of legitimate rights? It is true this appears to have now become almost the practice,‡ the temporalities being refused

* Apud Raynal. 1426, No. 19.

† Ap. Rayn. 1427, No. 15; compare Walsingh. and Burnet, i. 110; and Collect. of Records, 98; and ib. ii.; Records, 35, p. 321.

‡ One of Chicheley's predecessors, the learned and energetic William Courtney, displayed no such spiritless reception of new

until this second oath was taken; yet who but the archbishop was to set the example to others? who but he was to be in the van of every battle with the world? True it is, the second oath touched nothing in the first, if the first contained nothing against the rights of the Crown; but, in the sense intended by the king, these rights had a well-known meaning, which the facts of the contest had again and again made manifest. Nor were these the only instances of Chicheley's subserviency to the Crown: when Henry V. was still living, he had shown how easily his irritated feelings made him forget his duty to the Chair of St. Peter.

When Chicheley found that Beauford of Winchester was to be made cardinal and legate, he wrote not to the Holy See, to point out any evils which he thought might arise, but to Henry V., awakening his jealousy: "What this legacie would extend to or 'gendre against the good governanse of your subjects, in your high wisdom I trist to God ye will consider." His feeling in thus writing he himself unconsciously laid open, in a subsequent part of the same letter. I trust you will "see the state of the Church be maintained," "so that every of the ministers thereof hold them content with her own part." The tone of the letter is, in other respects, very significant; it is always "*your Church*," "*your clerks*." As if to show that he almost intended Henry to think the Church was his as much as the kingdom was, he actually puts them in juxtaposition: "by slander of your foresaid Church or of your land." *

The spirit of such a letter is but too consistent with that of his subsequent appeal to a general council, or to the Pope "better informed;" but having now, more or less, conquered the vexation which had extorted from him this undutiful appeal, and being urged by

oaths, and much less of any that trenched upon the old privileges of his order or his duty to the Holy See.—See Harpsfeld (p. 538), whose account is drawn from the archiepiscopal registers.

* Ap. Life of Chichelé, Lond. 1783, App. No. 3.

the Pope's reiterated commands, Chicheley, at last, fully and publicly obeyed. Having given due notice of his intention, he went, in company with the other bishops, and with all the abbots then in parliament, to the ample refectory of Westminster Abbey. A deputation from the Commons having likewise arrived, Chicheley addressed them with a discourse upon the text: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and to God, the things that are God's." He pointed out the right which the Pope had to make "provisions;" and he entreated them for their own salvation, and for the prosperity of the realm, to abrogate the obnoxious statutes, adding that such was his own sincere desire (Jan. 31, 1428).*

Having thus far obeyed, Chicheley does not appear to have made any further exertion. He does not seem to have been heart and soul in the business; and therefore no wonder it languished. In many respects this archbishop is worthy of all praise; he was learned, and often energetic; and became the founder of All Souls College, and of various other useful institutions. Had he less of the courtier, he would have made an accomplished prelate. These good qualities, however, were but little consolation to Martin V., when he saw the enslaved condition of the Church, and saw that, although some stir was made, nothing effectual was done. The zealous Pope died before he could himself act more decisively (A.D. 1431); and his successor, Eugenius IV., was, for some time, too effectually embarrassed by his own personal difficulties to be able to resume the negotiations.

As soon, however, as these troubles began to subside, Eugenius endeavoured to obtain the repeal of the statute, for which Martin V. had so repeatedly but ineffectually written. He informed the young Henry of his father's intention a little before his death, and exhorted him to fulfil it. Still, however, there was delay, until public attention was engrossed by the

* Ap. Burn. i.; Records, No. 40, p. 100.

reverses in France, and national discontent, and, at last, a sanguinary civil war.

Perhaps one cause of the king's lukewarmness, was the firm rejection of a petition which, for a twelvemonth, he had, again and again, made to the Holy See. He wished to raise a young man to the episcopal dignity who was under the canonical age; but Eugenius declined to admit such a candidate, and in this refusal remained inflexible.*

* See his letter to Henry VI. and to the king of Castille, in Rayn. 1435; and compare Harpsf. p. 620.

CHAPTER LIX.

THE WARS OF THE ROSES, AND THEIR EVIL CONSEQUENCES—DECLINE OF TASTE—DESPOTISM OF THE CROWN—RESISTANCE OF THE KNIGHTS HOSPITALLERS OF ST. JOHN'S, CLERKENWELL—THE FIRST PURPOSE OF LEADENHALL DEFEATED BY THE KING'S INJUSTICE—ROSS'S DESCRIPTION OF THE EFFECTS OF THE CIVIL WAR UPON THE COUNTY OF WARWICK.

DURING the early part of the fifteenth century, when the Great Schism had just terminated, the nation was listening with a delusive rapture to the tidings of Henry the Fifth's triumphs in France. In a few years, that rapture had died away in the wailings of defeat, and the scourge which England had brandished over others was desolating its own homesteads: the families of York and Lancaster were beginning their lengthened feud. Henry VI. being taken prisoner, in almost the first conflict, submitted his claims to a trial, and ratified the decision, which confirmed his own possession of the crown, but pronounced York the heir-apparent. Margaret, the queen of Henry, determined, however, to maintain the claims of her son, and, flying towards the Scottish borders, called to arms in vindication of his rights. At this news, York hastened exultingly to the north, to scatter what appeared to be an insignificant opposition; but he returned no more: his army sleeps beneath the sod of Wakefield plains, and his own head was hung up upon the walls of the city of York (A.D. 1460).

His son, Edward, took up his cause; and arousing the Welsh borderers, wins the victory of Mortimer's Cross, enters London, imprisons Henry VI., and is crowned king as Edward IV (A.D. 1461). Margaret, however, flushed with the victory of Wakefield, has

led the Scottish borderers to St. Alban's. There ends her victorious career. Defeated at St. Alban's, and still more completely at Towton, in Yorkshire, and surrounded with every kind of hardship and danger, she escapes to the Continent.

A brief peace followed. Then, again, there was arming, gathering, burning, slaughtering. Clarence had quarrelled with his brother, Edward IV., and along with the mighty earl of Warwick, the "king-maker," unfurls the banner of Henry VI. The battle of "Barnet-field" follows; then that of Tewkesbury; and again, at the death-cries of Henry VI., Warwick, Clarence, and the prince of Wales, strife was hushed, although the thirst of vengeance was burning in the hearts of thousands (A.D. 1471).

A few years more, and King Edward, the successful, the handsome, the intemperate, dies, in the prime of life, the victim of unbridled passions. His children are murdered by his brother Gloucester, who becomes king as Richard III. Again the civil war partially revives; and Richard's triumph over the failure and death of Buckingham, his new opponent, is quickly followed by his own rout and death at Bosworth (A.D. 1485). The victorious earl of Richmond, now Henry VII., reigns in the midst of alarms, but finally leaves an undisputed crown to his son, Henry VIII (A.D. 1509).*

Such were the chief events of the middle and latter part of the fifteenth century. In a resolute civil war, it is impossible to enforce the laws, and the wicked too generally prosper. Studies are thrown aside by ardent youth, or disturbed by the approach of battle. Amongst the clergy, as amongst other orders, the evil is deeply felt. Their preparation for so holy a

* Warkworth, Will. of Worcest., Fabyan, Pol. Vergil, &c. In 1459, just before the most violent part of the war, a legate arrived from Pius II., to invite the prelates and the king's ambassadors to a general council. He was honourably received; but the fury of war rendered it impossible for England to assist. The Pope finally abandoned his intention.—Whethamst. ap. Hearne, p. 448.

state is less complete, and subsequent temptations are greater, while the wholesome restraint of canon law is unavoidably relaxed. We may infer, then, without much danger of mistake, that property, knowledge, and religion alike suffered.

This inference is sadly confirmed by all the surviving monuments of that age. People, says Warkworth, were obliged "at every battle to come far out of their own countries, at their own cost; and these, and such others, brought England right low." The decline of good taste, during the latter part of this period, is obvious in many of the tombs and churches: architecture and its various subsidiary arts never recovered.

Freedom too, the rough freedom, real in its broad results, though often compromised for a time in some of its details, and which had never been entirely lost from the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, was now not indeed destroyed, but stricken down and grievously enfeebled. The baronage was all but extinct, and a new nobility, called into life by the king, displayed a servile spirit little like that of the barons of Runnymede. The king was thus virtually absolute. Raised to the throne by a victorious struggle, and surrounded by a dependent, spiritless House of Peers, he had nothing to dread from the opposition of the Commons, who were themselves weary of revolution and blood. The only real check upon despotism was the influence of the Church. Even this Edward IV. seemed inclined to set at nought. Thus, the prior of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John's, Clerkenwell, having died, Edward, as if thinking that any knight would be a proper superior, forgetting that he should be a monk no less than a knight, invaded their freedom of election, by requiring them to choose Richard "Wideville," his brother-in-law, a valiant soldier, as their prior (A.D. 1468). They, however, refused, and chose another. Great was the confusion that followed; but the convent was resolute, and Edward was compelled to yield, and to learn that there was a limit to his

power.* This limit, however, was not always contended for as it ought to have been. When illegal taxes were wrung from an impoverished nation, the prelates might be in some degree excused for their silence; but when the property of the poor was seized, it was assuredly their place to speak, and yet there seems to have been no remonstrance. Amongst the numberless charitable foundations in every part of the country, was one left by Simon Eyre, a lord mayor of London, the builder of what was termed the Leaden Hall, and the once adjoining and beautiful chapel. Simon used, every summer, to store up wood and coals in the Hall, and to sell them at prime cost to the poorer inhabitants. Seeing the good which was thus effected, he left at his death a thousand pounds for the continuance of the charity. This sum, far greater than the same amount at the present day, was borrowed by Edward IV., and, as usual, was never repaid. Yet, in this, and in other cases when the poor were evidently defrauded, there was, alas! not even a remonstrance. The terrible prestige of blood and victory seems to have struck the bishops dumb: the conqueror of Towton and Tewkesbury set his scornful foot unchecked upon the poor, nor removed it until God cut him off in the prime of his days (A.D. 1483).†

Mournful as is this brief survey of the losses inflicted upon property and freedom, it conveys but little idea of the scourge of civil war. Something more accurate may be learned from a local description. Ross, the antiquarian of Guy's Cliff, has depicted for us the state of his native county of Warwick. He himself, after the battle of Ludlow, had presented to the parliament, then assembled at Coventry, an address upon the fearful destruction of life and property (Michaelmas, A.D. 1459).

As this address led to no result, Ross committed what he beheld to writing. He enumerates the many towns and hamlets within about twelve miles of War-

* Will. of Worc. p. 517; Lel. Coll. p. 251.

† Harpsf. p. 636, and Fabyan.

wick, and then comparing their condition in his own time with that of the time of Edward I., as displayed by the records of some of the towns, he states that Cherlcote had contained fifty-seven holdings, now reduced to six or seven, with the rectory and manor; that Compton Mordak had contained twenty-seven free holdings, besides the house and land of the rectory, now reduced to the manor alone and the church; Compton Shorfen had sixty-three, now not one; Chesturton Magna, seventy-nine, of which scarcely three and the manor remain.

Continuing this melancholy detail, and now and then pouring out a denunciation of God's judgments upon the perpetrators,* Ross describes the breaking up of the markets, the despair and poverty of surviving rustics when they can no longer sell their garden produce; the numbers of men, women, and children that perished by hunger or the sword; and the bands of robbers that couched among the trees and brambles of the ruined towns and monasteries, with their ranks swollen with the famished poor. The sacred character of the family, he states, was in every way violated: no concern for children, no mutual reverence; fathers and sons living by plunder or beggary, mothers and daughters by open sin. Landed proprietors, with wofully diminished rent-rolls, turned many of their ruined holdings into pasture, disputing, as well as they could, with beasts and robbers for some portion of their flocks and herds. Stately castles, some lately erected, lay in silent ruin. Highways were broken up. Even at the gates of cities, mud and rubbish had so accumulated, and men cared so little to throw open the way to their dwellings, that even noblemen with large retinues could scarcely find admittance. Many of the water-courses, too, were

* In these denunciations, it is curious to see how the antiquary loves to turn from his direct object into prolonged digressions, that teem with antiquarian, classical, and scriptural knowledge, but perplex an incautious reader, and try the patience of those that seek for the really pregnant facts of the writer's own time.

choked up, and the neighbouring meadows became marshes, with all the brood of diseases that desolate a fenny country.*

One point of view from which Ross forms his estimate of these evils is quite characteristic of the times. On the fourth Sunday of Lent, he remarks, the Pope solemnly utters anathema upon all public criminals; and, amongst the rest, upon those that injure the patrimony of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and of the Holy Roman Church. Now, by the concession of English kings, each English house, he continues, rightly and justly, and for many centuries, paid its annual penny to the Holy See. The destroyers of such houses will, therefore, incur this anathema: "He who lives † without the law shall perish without law."

The results of the same evils to the universities did not escape his observation. The prosperity of the Church, he observes, consists, in great measure, in the knowledge of its learned men, who preach the faith or defend it against heretics, as well as in the devout service of ecclesiastics, both secular and religious. Now, the fountain-head of learning is the universities, and the general studies which are maintained by endowed colleges, benefices, and temporalities. If this property be destroyed, the colleges are destroyed. But when the towns are ruined, the property is destroyed. Want then invades the schools. They are deserted. Then, in the dearth of knowledge and preaching, heretics will rapidly sow their errors; and in the general want of all things, the building and repairs of the churches must cease; the books for the choir and the library will fail; singing, devotion, and study will fail: in short, the Church of Christ, both among seculars and religious, would equally come to nought.‡

Such being some of the evils under which England

* Rossi Hist. Reg. p. 120, &c., Hearne's 2nd ed. Ox. 1745.

† Ross is probably quoting from memory: it is, "Whosoever hath sinned without the law," &c.

‡ Ross. Hist. Reg. pp. 128, 129, 130, &c.

lay groaning during the civil wars, the state of religion, although not expressly recorded, may be but too easily understood. Trade and commerce, however, soon began to revive, and, notwithstanding the royal despotism, England, if we may believe Polydore Vergil, became again, before the death of Edward IV., “a most wealthy realm, abounding in all things.”*

* Ib. p. 172. Polydore came into England in the reign of Henry VII.

APPENDIX TO VOLUME I.

[A.]

(*From page 165.*)

ALTHOUGH it does not fall within the plan of this work to describe in minute detail ancient customs and usages, it may be both interesting and useful to produce a few extracts from the works of Archbishop Egbert, one of the earliest surviving monuments of the Anglo-Saxon Church. Of these works there are still extant, his Dialogues, his Manual of Canons, and his Penitential. The Dialogues are a series of questions on various practical and, for the most part, ecclesiastical matters. Their object is not clearly known. Some think they were drawn up preparatory to a synod. If so, a complete treatise is not to be expected: each point would be handled according to the objects of the synod, and no further. Let no one take scandal at the thought that there could be crimes enough amongst the clergy to require the coercion of the canon or even the common law. If there was, as it has often been remarked, one Judas among the twelve Apostles, and probably one Nicholas the heresiarch among the seven deacons, what wonder that something of the same kind should happen in subsequent ages? Let no one therefore take scandal. Let him, however, who "thinketh himself to stand, take heed lest he fall."

I. If ecclesiastics committed a crime within the Church, they were to be punished by the bishops, according to the admonition of the Apostle. If they committed a crime amongst the laity, they were to fall into the hands of those against whom they had sinned.*

II. A man might be ordained a bishop, priest, or deacon, if he had neither married twice,† nor had married one who had been divorced;

* Ap. Wilk. i. p. 83.

† If his wife were still living at the time of his ordination, they must, previously, and by mutual consent, have for ever separated; see Egbert's canons as quoted below, p. 627, where every priest is forbidden ever to allow any woman to live in his house, and where it is said that the clergy who were not in Holy Orders might marry, but that those in Holy Orders "might not by any means;" or again, in Egbert's Penitential, "If a priest or deacon take a wife, let him be degraded" (*infra*, p. 628).

provided that he had never been subjected to public penance, that he were not a slave, and that he had acquired knowledge.

If a man had been ordained, and afterwards fell into the sin of idolatry, or of superstition by incantations, auguries, and divinations, or of false testimony, or homicide, or fornication, or theft, or perjury, he was to be degraded. If he did public penance, he might indeed be readmitted to communion, but never again "to the honour of his former dignity."*

III. The fast of the Four Seasons (Ember-days) was begun in the Old Law, and afterwards "in the New Testament holy men and apostolic doctors" continued it, on the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday of each of the four weeks. "We, in the Church of the English," observe it, "as our teacher blessed Gregory, in his Antiphonarium and Missal-book transmitted it, arranged and written out, through our instructor blessed Augustine." The fourth of these weeks, the Catholic Church, by authority of Holy Scriptures, is accustomed to observe as a special preparation for the approaching solemnity of Christmas-day, "so that every one of the faithful may prepare himself for devoutly receiving the communion of the body and blood of Christ." The nation of the Angles, indeed, "from the time of Pope Vitalian, and Theodore the archbishop," is accustomed to observe not only the Ember-days, but the twelve successive days immediately before the Nativity, "in fasts, and watchings, and prayers, and abundant alms, both in the monasteries and amongst the people." Many, indeed, have fasted at other times, on the Wednesdays and Fridays on account of the Passion of Christ, and on the Saturdays on account of his lying that day in the tomb.†

Another work written by Egbert is his treatise, "Of the Canons," being "extracts from the sayings and canons of the Holy Fathers." It was compiled as a manual for the clergy. There being no fewer than one hundred and sixty-three heads, the present selection must necessarily be very limited.

Not all the clergy, but only priests, ought to use and investigate the "judgments of canonical institution;" "for as none but bishops and priests ought to offer sacrifice, so ought no one else to administer these judgments."‡

Every priest ought to know the canons; and to build his church

* Ap. Wilk. i. p. 85; and ap. Thorpe's Ancient Laws and Institutes, p. 320.

† Ap. Wilk. i. pp. 85, 86; ed. 1737.

‡ "Veruntamen non omnes clerici iudicia canonicæ institutionis usurpare aut legere debent, sed solummodo presbyteri, sicut enim sacrificium non debent nisi episcopi et presbyteri, sic nec iudicia ista alii usurpare debent."

with all diligence, and keep the relics of the saints with the utmost zeal in nightly vigils and divine offices. All priests ought to preach to the people the Gospel of Christ, on all Sundays and festivals ; to teach all under their care how to pay properly the tithes of all their possessions to the churches of God ; to divide this tithe into three parts, giving the first to the decoration of the church, the second with all humility and mercy to pilgrims and the poor, and reserving the third for their own support. No priest was to celebrate Mass in private houses, or anywhere, indeed, except in a consecrated church. Baptism was to be administered only at the canonical times, except to the sick. No priest was "ever to allow any woman to dwell in the house in which he himself dwelt ;" nor to become a surety ; nor, forsaking his own law, to have recourse to secular tribunals ; nor to excite a law-suit against his neighbour ; nor to carry arms ; nor to enter taverns for the sake of eating or drinking ; nor to take any oath.

"Let all priests with the utmost vigilance adjudge a suitable penance for all those that confess to them their crimes ; and let them mercifully give the viaticum, and the communion of the body of Christ, to all the sick before their departure from life," "according to the decree of the Holy Fathers." "If any one be in danger, let him be diligently anointed with oil sanctified by prayers ;" and "let the priest always have the Eucharist ready for the sick, in order that they may not die without communion."*

If any of the laity do not communicate at Christmas, and Easter, and Pentecost, let them not be considered Catholics (No. 38). Let not a layman dare to teach in presence of the clergy, except at their request (89).

Let the bishop, as far as possible, give food and clothing to the poor and sick, who are too feeble to labour with their own hands (56).

Let the bishop diligently provide for the construction, reparation, and adorning of the churches of his diocese ; and regularity of life among the servants of God (28).

Let the bishop hear the cause of every one (except in confession) in the presence of his clergy.

If clergy or monks are convicted of plotting against the bishops, let them be degraded (60).

"If disputes have arisen in any province, let them be referred to the greater see or council, or likewise to the Apostolic See at Rome" (49).†

"Let not altars, unless made of stone, be consecrated with the

* Ap. W. xx. xxi. and xxii. pp. 102 and 103.

† Ib. xlix. lii. pp. 104—110.

anointing of Chrism" (52). "If the altar be moved, let the church be again consecrated. If only the walls were renewed, and not the altar, let it be exorcised with salt and water" (141).

Prisoners for any offence whatever, are to be produced once a week to the archdeacon or bishop, in order that their necessities may be made known and relieved (107).

In conformity with the canon of Pope Silvester, "let no layman bring an accusation against a cleric:" therefore, let not the testimony of a layman against a clergyman be admitted (144). It may here be observed, that, even in trials in the ordinary courts, any man who produced a charge against another was obliged to support his own oath by that of seven honest men, or to abandon his charge.

If any Christian sell to Jew or Pagan a Christian as a slave, let him be anathema (150).

Let no one shave his head in the fashion of the barbarians (152).

Let all clerics who are able to work, learn both handicrafts and literature (159). Clerics not in holy orders can marry; "but let priests by no means marry, but love the Church" (160).* The same prohibition, it may be remarked, occurs in the Penitential,† another of Egbert's works. "If a priest or deacon take a wife, let him be degraded."‡

The Penitential contains many matters regarding confession and Holy Eucharist. With regard to the latter's being reserved for use, we read: "If any one neglects the hallowed housel, so as to keep it too long, and it does not seem clean, or has lost its form, let him fast forty days."§ Then follows a list of sins, of which if a man has committed any one, "let him not presume to approach the altar of God, or to receive the body of Christ before he has been converted by penance; let him then do as his confessor prescribes and points out."|| After which follows an account of the custom "beyond sea;" where the bishop, on Ash-Wednesday, seated on his episcopal throne, was accustomed to hear the confessions of persons conscious of capital crimes, and then, having assigned them their penance,¶ to dismiss them; and

* Ap. W. pp. 110—112.

† If the Penitential published in Thorpe's "Ancient Laws and Institutes" be the work of St. Theodore, as is highly probable, much of what is given as Egbert's is only a compilation from Theodore, and is therefore a still more decisive testimony of the early as well as general discipline of the Church among the Anglo-Saxons. See Thorpe's Preface.

‡ I. p. 133, ap. W. vol. i.; Pœnit. Eg. lib. iii. No. 1, ap. Thorpe.

§ Pœn. ap. W. p. 139.

|| VIII. ap. Wilk i. p. 126.

¶ "He ðonne him tæcþ hynæ rinna bore," which Wilkins translates "emendationem," &c. p. 126 (xii.). In like manner in p. 134 (xi.), where it is

having seen them again on Holy Thursday, to give them "forgiveness," and send them home with his benediction. Such is the custom, it is added, "of all Christian people."

St. James remarks, the same work continues, that if any one is sick, he is to call in his priests and other servants of God, in order to be anointed with holy oil. This anointing every one of the faithful shall procure for himself, if possible; since it is written that the soul of every one that receives this rite, is pure after death as that of a child that has died immediately after baptism.*

"If a man swore upon a hallowed cross and broke the oath, he was to fast for three years; but if the cross had not been blessed, he was to fast for one year."†

"If a man slay any one in orders, or a kinsman, let him leave country and possessions, and fare to Rome to the Pope, and do as the Pope shall prescribe."‡

If a man be sick or delicate, the fasting or austerity prescribed by his confessor, may be commuted for almsdeeds. The proportion depended not only on the first penance, but also upon the degree of the penitent's wealth or poverty.§

[B.]

(From page 237.)

"Hubert, your legate, O religious Father, has admonished me to do homage to you and your successors, and to take more care in the collection of the money which my predecessors have been accustomed to send to the Roman Church. The one I admit; the other I do not admit. I would not before, nor will I now, do homage; because neither have I made such a promise, nor can I discover that my predecessors have made such a promise to your predecessors. During my absence in Gaul for about three years, the money has been negligently collected. Having now, however, through the divine mercy returned to my kingdom, the money which was collected by the forementioned legate is on its way; and the rest shall be sent when an opportunity offers, by the envoys of Lanfranc, our faithful archbishop. Pray for us, and for the state of our

said that a fallen monk or nun, if they wish to return to God, must first confess with weeping, and do penance, "beton," or, as W. has it, "et emendent." The editors of the *Monumenta* exclaim loudly against Wilkins's translation of the Saxon: Pref.

* Penit. D. Egb. xv. p. 127; ap. Wilk. vol. i.

† Ib. p. 142.

‡ Ap. W. i. p. 136.

§ Ib. p. 140.

kingdom, because we have loved your predecessors, and we desire above all things to love you sincerely, and to listen to you obediently.”*

[C.]

(From page 240.)

PROFESSIONS OF OBEDIENCE MADE TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY BY HIS SUFFRAGANS; AND QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED IN A BISHOP ELECT.

In the Canterbury archives, many of these professions are still extant. Some have been published by Hearne, Wharton, and others. Amongst the earliest of these are two to Archbishop Celnoth, one by Berthred, of Lindisfari, on the southern bank of the Humber, and the other by St. Swithin, of Winchester.

Berthred, after his promise of obedience, thus continues:—“I profess the orthodox Catholic and Apostolical Faith. I receive also the decrees of the popes, and of the six Catholic (general) councils of holy and ancient men. Willingly do I subscribe to the holy decrees of the Catholic canons, and the definitions of early and recent pontiffs.”†

St. Swithin, after a confession of the Blessed Trinity, and, in general, of the faith held by the Fathers, declares that, in the same manner in which his predecessors had always been subject to the see of Canterbury, he too would observe all things, rendering firm obedience to Celnoth and his successors.‡

The profession made by Eadulf of York is more full than that of St. Swithin, but is to the same effect.

Denebert, of Worcester, adds (about A.D. 798):—“I receive also the decrees of the popes, and the six councils.” “This is our faith,” he continues, “made strong by evangelical and apostolical traditions, and founded on the society of all the Catholic churches in the world.”§

Bermed, of Rochester, pledges himself in similar terms. Some of these professions were exceedingly brief: thus—“I, Donatus, the bishop elect of the church of Dublin, which is situated in Ireland, promise canonical obedience to thee and to thy successors, O Lanfranc, archbishop of the holy church of Canterbury.”||

* Ep. of Lanf. vii. ap. Max. Bib. Patr. tom. xviii. p. 810.

† Ap. Wharton, vol. i. p. 79.

‡ Hearne's Text. Roff. p. 269.

§ H. Tex. Roff. Addend. pp. 249, 253.

|| Ap. Whart. i. p. 81. This profession by an Irish bishop is still an historical difficulty. It should not, however, be forgotten that the English bishops of the

To these professions of obedience may be added the qualifications which were expected in a bishop elect. What they were may be easily learned from the nature of the recommendation of the episcopal electors. Thus, when William had been elected to the see of Winchester, the electors wrote to St. Anselm to petition for his consecration ; and the character which they gave him proves that they had in their minds St. Paul's description of the qualities of a good bishop. They averred that William was well known to the electors to be "imbued with apostolical and ecclesiastical discipline ; a Catholic in faith, prudent by nature, docile, and patient ; of modest demeanour, of chaste life, sober, humble, affable, merciful, learned, instructed in the law of God, accurate in the meaning of the Scriptures, well versed in ecclesiastical dogmas, understanding ecclesiastical rules in a sound sense without deviating from the path of the Scriptures, and the tradition of the orthodox, and the constitutions of the canons and decrees of the bishops of the Apostolic See ; . . . embracing him who is according to doctrine, faithful of speech, modestly rebuking those that resist, and well able to withstand and confute those that oppose sound doctrine," &c.*

[D.]

(*From page 459.*)

EXTRACTS FROM SYNODAL DECREES, ETC., IN THE EARLY PART OF THE
REIGN OF HENRY III.

The confusion which had arisen from the Danish and Norman wars, was not even yet completely rectified. Stringent laws were, therefore, passed in the synod of Durham against those that lived unchastely (A.D. 1220).† It was added :—If the concubines (the so-called wives) of priests will not marry, or enter a cloister, or do public penance, let them first be deprived of the kiss of peace, and of blessed bread in the church, and let them and those that communicate with them be excommunicated. If they do not yet amend, let them be delivered up to

eleventh century seem to have considered all the Irish sees as subject to the primacy of Canterbury (see their reply to Rufus, *suprà*, p. 270) ; and that William of Malmesbury and the Chronicler of Waverley held the same opinion. "*Cantuariensis habet episcopos Hiberniæ*," &c.—W. of Malm. *de Gest. Reg.* l. iii. sect. 300. The Waverley writer, when recording the fact that four palliums, one for the bishop of Dublin, were taken to Ireland by the legate Paparo, complains of such a concession as being contrary to custom, and derogatory to the dignity of the see of Canterbury : *ann.* 1152.

* Ap. Wharton, i. p. 82.

† Ap. Wilk. i. 573.

secular justice.* If a priest lead any of his flock into sin, let him know that, in detestation of so great a crime, according to the canons and the statutes of the Holy Fathers, his punishment is fifteen years' penance, and confinement for the rest of his days in a monastery.

Let priests and clerics wear their uppermost garments closed, and wear such as are not remarkable either for shortness or length.† Let them not wear pectorals, bits, gilt spurs, or any other superfluity. Let them not gaze at buffoons, minstrels, or actors, nor play at games of hazard or at dice, or be present at such amusements. Let them never be advocates in secular courts, except for the destitute poor.‡ Let them never exact anything for their dispensation of the sacraments or sacramentals: let them give gratuitously what they have gratuitously received. Let them not so load themselves with the obligation of Masses for the dead, as to be obliged to discharge it by means of other priests.

The following are some of the decrees of the Council of Oxford (A.D. 1222):—

Let priests say their office diligently and devoutly, as well that of the night as that of the day. Let them feed the people with the nourishment of God's word. Remembering the Gospel lesson, that at the last judgment those that visit the sick shall be rewarded with an eternal kingdom, we command that, as often as they are called, they go to the sick speedily and cheerfully.§

In the constitutions drawn up by Cardinal Langton, to be proposed at the same Council of Oxford, we read, that when infants in danger of death had been baptized by laymen, the priests should supply only those ceremonies "that follow the immersion, not those that precede it." Baptism then by immersion was still the discipline of the Church.||

* Ap. Wilk. i. p. 574.

† So, too, Council of Oxford held by Langton, in 1222; Wilk. i. p. 589 and 592.

‡ Ib.

§ Wilk. i. p. 586. It would appear impossible for those priests that had to attend to the heavy duties of a parish, to be able to rise in the night for the reciting of those psalms and other devotions of the divine office which are known as Matins and Lauds. They were, therefore, allowed to say them at daybreak. On Sundays and festivals these devotions were chanted, and were invariably attended by the greater part of the congregation. The office of the preceding afternoon was attended in the same manner.—See Dr. Rock's *Church of our Fathers*, vol. iii. part ii. p. 138.

|| This practice of conferring baptism by immersion, was received from the "Roman Church," as the first Council of Clovesho (A.D. 747) testifies, and was enforced by the synod of Calcuith (A.D. 816). Already, however, the custom of conferring this sacrament by infusion was making progress, as may be clearly inferred from St. Thomas on baptism. Deaconesses were the canonical attendants in the baptizing of females by immersion. That order having become obsolete, a proper delicacy suggested a change. Infants, moreover, were in some peril

In the Councils both of Oxford and Durham we are reminded that baptism is the first plank after shipwreck. It is necessary for all ages and both sexes. It removes original sin, which is contracted without one's own consent, but actual sin which is not contracted without consent, it does not remit without consent. It may be said, how can little ones have faith? It may be answered, either from the faith of their ancestors, from whom they contracted original sin, or from that habit of faith as contradistinguished from its use, which they receive in baptism.

Instruct the people about the truth of Christ's body and blood in the holy Eucharist, "for far from doubt they receive under the appearance of bread what hung for us upon the cross; and receive in the chalice that which was poured out from the side of Christ."

Let the Sacrament of Matrimony be celebrated with honour and reverence, and not jocosely, nor in taverns. If a doubt arise concerning matrimony, let no official, nor any dean or priest, define the case; let it be referred to the bishop. Let not marriage take place within the fourth degree of kindred.

The difference of rules for hospitals produces great confusion. Let those that wish to found a new one, first obtain from us its rule and institute.*

from the shock of the immersion. Thus for sound reasons the Church abandoned the more usual practice of its earlier ages. Clement V., in 1311, sanctioned the change in the second Council of Ravenna, by making the immersion optional: "*sub trina aspersione vel immersione.*"—Labbe R. XI.

* Council of Durham and Oxford, Wilk. i. pp. 575, 579, 581, 583, and 594.

END OF VOL. I.

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ERRATA IN VOL. I.

- Page* 6, *line* . 7, *for* ‘Six,’ *read* ‘Five.’
 ,, 68, ,, 1, *supply* ‘as,’ *before* ‘far.’
 ,, 165, ,, 19, *omit* ‘has.’
 ,, ,, 25, *for* ‘Glastonbury,’ *read* ‘Malmesbury.’
 ,, 176, *at top,* *for* ‘823,’ *read* ‘803.’
 ,, 362, *line* 15, *for* ‘three,’ *read* ‘two.’
 ,, 404, ,, 13, *for* ‘St. Mellitus of Canterbury,’ *read* ‘St. Mellitus,
 then bishop of London.’
 ,, 439 (*note* 2nd), *for* ‘Thorn,’ *read* ‘Gerv.’
 ,, 489, *line* 7, *for* ‘general [superior?],’ *read* ‘general, or superior.’

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